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FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION

Official Records

15th PLENARY MEETING

Monday, 4 October 1993
at 3 p.m.
NEW YORK

President: Mr. INSANALLY
(Guyana)

The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

ADDRESS BY MR. ANTONIO MASCARENHAS MONTEIRO, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CAPE VERDE

The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): The Assembly will hear an address by the President of the Republic of Cape Verde.

Mr. Antonio Mascarenhas Monteiro, President of the Republic of Cape Verde, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): On behalf of the General Assembly I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Republic of Cape Verde, His Excellency Mr. Antonio Mascarenhas Monteiro, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President MONTEIRO (*spoke in Portuguese; English text furnished by the delegation*): I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as President of this session of the General Assembly. Your well-known skills and your vast knowledge of the United Nations augur well for the success of the session's work.

I should like to pay a tribute to your predecessor as President, Mr. Stoyan Ganev, former Foreign Minister of Bulgaria, for work well done.

I should also like to express my appreciation to the Secretary-General for the dynamism he has brought to United Nations activities, for his constant efforts to contribute to the betterment of the Organization and for his personal commitment to reforming the Secretariat structures and improving the Organization's efficiency in the discharge of its functions and duties.

We live in a time of great hopes. The political events of the recent past have greatly facilitated adherence to democratic values, while at the same time they have contributed to the world movement in favour of respect for human rights and have promoted the world's awareness of the necessity for urgent measures to improve the living conditions of all peoples as well as the planet's environment.

Indeed, in a short period of time a substantial number of countries have, against all odds, attained their independence and recovered their freedom. The ideological confrontation of the past has been replaced by political cooperation between countries, and conflicts with a long history, such as the struggle against apartheid and the situation in the Middle East, seem finally to be close to a negotiated solution. On the other hand, democracy, as a desirable system of government, has gained an unprecedented dimension and support, although much remains to be done to consolidate it.

These are indeed political developments of the greatest importance that shape and at the same time are the result of a world in profound transformation. That transformation bodes well for a more stable future in the relations between nations and peoples. While on the one hand these changes augur well for a better, more humane and more just and

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stable world, they have, on the other hand, been accompanied by the resurgence of many conflicts, most of them of an internal nature. Indeed, in many regions of the world, especially in Europe and in Africa, ancient ethnic rivalries or internal struggles for power have turned into open conflicts, leaving a trail of death and destruction, spawning millions of refugees and displaced persons and giving rise to regional instability.

I have been witnessing with deep concern the development of many of these conflicts in Africa, which have a negative impact not only on the countries involved but on the entire region. At a time when all our efforts and resources should be put to good use to assist the development of our countries and continent and to create better living conditions for our peoples, we have come to realize that the scarce resources that we still have in our countries are wasted on the fire of armed conflicts, and the few economic structures that were left are being sacrificed to violence.

The armed conflicts that appear to proliferate almost everywhere seem to elude the efforts of the United Nations. In most of these conflicts, the world has been faced with tremendous difficulties in containing and managing them, notwithstanding the constant efforts of the Security Council and the Secretary General.

Such is the case of the conflict in Angola, a sister country whose suffering people have for more than 30 years endured the horrors of war, the anxiety of constant instability and the uncertainty of the future. Despite the enormous efforts made, especially by the United Nations, the conflict in Angola continues to cause death and the destruction of the country. The international community had placed great hopes in the elections of September last year that were supervised by this Organization. We all expected that those elections would be the last step in a peace process that would finally put an end to decades of destruction and give birth to a new and democratic Angola, thus creating the climate of political and social harmony in the country so much needed for its development.

Instead, the events that followed the elections have been regrettably translated into a violent and tragic situation known to the whole world, a situation which is a cause of deep concern to us all and in which many thousands of lives are being lost, while the suffering of the population that has lasted so long continues and the destruction of cities and the economic infrastructure goes on. Unfortunately, the repeated mediation efforts of the United Nations and other forums and entities, geared towards obtaining a cease-fire and the resumption of the Bicesse process, have so far not attained the expected results.

There should be no illusions, for, as the long history of this conflict has abundantly demonstrated, no military victory can guarantee lasting peace and stability and the prosperity of the country. I do not envisage any alternative to negotiations if peace is to prevail as a goal to be achieved by all in Angola. The use of violent means following the elections cannot be justified and, indeed, shows blatant disregard for the sovereign will of the people, which was expressed freely and fairly, as certified by the international community.

I sincerely hope that, worn out by a protracted and devastating war, faced with a country whose economic structure has been destroyed and touched by the social and human drama caused by the hostilities, the parties to the conflict, especially UNITA, will rise to the moment and, moved by political realism, lend the negotiations the much-needed political will and seriousness, thereby demonstrating the magnanimity that the security and the well-being of the Angolan people require.

The Angolan experience is a lesson that should be taken into consideration by the Organization in managing or assisting in the management of other conflicts. One such case is the conflict in Mozambique, a country to which Cape Verde is linked by fraternal ties. My country, as a member of the Security Council, has been following the situation in Mozambique very closely and with particular interest. After many years of war, peace seems finally to prevail in that country. The General Peace Agreements concluded last year defined the framework for the attainment of final and lasting peace. I therefore ascribe the utmost importance to the observance and timely implementation of these Agreements by both parties. It is a moral duty to the people of Mozambique, who are still going through the hardships of day-to-day life and who legitimately aspire to a future of peace, harmony and progress, that these Agreements be respected and abided by.

The positive steps taken lately in this regard give me grounds for hope. In this context, I consider particularly important the dialogue that has started between the President of the Republic of Mozambique, Mr. Joaquim Chissano and the President of RENAMO, Mr. Afonso Dhlakama. I hope that that dialogue will continue on a regular basis with a view to facilitating the removal of obstacles that might arise during the implementation of the peace agreements, so as to enable the elections to take place on the scheduled date. I appeal to both parties to exert all their efforts with a view

to expediting the implementation of key aspects of the Agreements before the elections, namely, the demobilization and the cantonment of troops and the formation of the national army of Mozambique.

I should also like to refer to the conflict in Liberia, which has been the focus of the attention of the countries of the West African subregion to which my own country belongs.

The conflict in Liberia has caused much destruction and the loss of thousands of lives, and has inflicted enormous pain and suffering on the population. It has been a source of constant concern to the countries of our subregion. The Cotonou Agreement, a decisive step in the quest for a lasting peaceful solution to the conflict, is the result of the international community's commendable efforts to establish peace in Liberia, efforts in which the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) played a pivotal role.

The recent Security Council decision to deploy an Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) to assist, in coordination with the forces of the ECOWAS Military Observer Group, in the implementation of the Cotonou Agreement is an appropriate and commendable one. I appeal to all the parties involved to abide by their obligations and cooperate with the United Nations and ECOWAS in order to secure the timely implementation of the peace agreement and the holding of the legislative and presidential elections on the scheduled date at the beginning of next year.

The situation in Somalia is one of the most tragic conflicts of modern times. This tragedy has resulted in the loss of hundreds of thousands of lives and in the disintegration of the country's civil society and administrative structures. The Security Council's timely decision to involve the United Nations in the management of the conflict and the humanitarian action of various organizations and entities have changed the situation in Somalia and created the conditions for the return of normalcy to the country.

Mr. Mroziewicz (Poland), Vice-President, took the Chair.

I commend the internationalist and humanitarian role of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM), whose presence there has contributed much to eliminating famine, re-establishing order and guaranteeing the security of the population, despite the condemnable and deliberate attacks to which the Operation has been subjected.

It is imperative that immediate efforts be made, in accordance with the last decision of the Security Council, to accelerate the process of consultations and contacts with all the parties and forces in Somalia, with a view to creating a climate of security there and bringing political harmony and administrative normalcy to the country.

On a more positive note, it is encouraging to see the progress made in the negotiations to bring the regime of apartheid to an end. The announcement of the establishment of a Transitional Executive Council is a major event in the long struggle against apartheid which will finally be eliminated with the holding of democratic elections next year.

Notwithstanding the substantial progress made over the years in the field of peaceful solution of inter-State conflicts, the tendency still persists in some countries to solve conflicts with other countries through the use of force. The conflict between Iraq and Kuwait illustrates well such a tendency, which led to the disastrous Gulf war. Despite the tragic lesson taught by this war and the various resolutions adopted by the Security Council, much tension still exists between the two countries. I hold it to be of fundamental importance to peace in the region that the two sister countries live together as good neighbours and respect their common borders, in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions.

Not long ago, we all thought that the conditions for peace and stability in the world had finally arrived, since the danger of a super-Power military confrontation and the rivalry between the two blocs had disappeared with the end of the cold war. However, we are now, paradoxically, confronted as never before with a series of armed conflicts. The time has come for a deep collective reflection in order to identify ways to contain these conflicts. At the same time, preventive measures should be adopted to eliminate or diminish the possibility of potential conflicts degenerating into armed confrontation. Preventing conflicts is the most secure and least expensive way of saving lives and preserving international peace and security.

The Secretary-General's "Agenda for Peace" contains a series of ideas and recommends a number of measures for the management, control and prevention of armed conflicts. I believe that most of the measures proposed by the Secretary-General, in particular those having to do with

preventive diplomacy, should be put into practice as soon as possible.

The United Nations and the regional organizations should be able to create effective mechanisms to control potential conflicts and to eliminate the political and social conditions which spawn them. We should bear in mind that the majority of the armed conflicts which today affect almost all regions of the world are internal, though some have international implications because of their repercussions on the peace and stability of neighbouring countries. If we want to prevent such armed conflicts, we should be able to address their root causes.

Amongst these root causes, attention should be focused on the limitations imposed by the denial of effective participation by all citizens in the process of the governance of their country, as well as on the violence resulting from disrespect for the fundamental human rights of the individual or of ethnic or religious groups.

I believe - and this is demonstrated by our own democratic experience in Cape Verde - that the internal stability of a country and the social harmony among its various groups have much to gain when all citizens are able to exercise freely, fairly and fully their political rights by participating in the definition of their country's destiny, choosing their system of Government and freely and periodically selecting their Government leaders.

The changes that have taken place in the international scene have unequivocally demonstrated the importance of the protection of human rights for all countries. Indeed, the respect for and the promotion of these rights have gained a global dimension and are today one of the most visible global issues on the international agenda. My country has a Constitution enshrining a vast list of fundamental rights, and the respect for human rights is one of the most important pillars of its internal and external policies. We therefore welcome the central role that the protection of human rights has today on the agenda of nations. Cape Verde is deeply committed to the cause of human rights promotion. Our policies and Government actions are guided not only by humanistic considerations but also by practical motives, for we believe that the respect for human rights introduces an equilibrium that creates internal conditions favourable to economic development and social harmony.

I therefore find it all the more difficult to accept the precarious human-rights situation in which the people of East Timor find themselves. In this regard, I encourage the Secretary-General to pursue his efforts with a view to finding a negotiated solution to the question of East Timor. In a world fraught with ethnic conflicts, respect for the rights of minorities should deserve the best of our attention and requires a deeper national awareness and better international protection as well.

I commend all those countries that have actively been promoting, at the world level, the cause of human rights. However, I think that such promotion must not be selective. For my country, the situation in which migrant workers find themselves in certain receiving States is an equally important human-rights issue.

Since Cape Verde is a country with an emigrant community abroad that is larger than the island's resident population, I cannot miss this opportunity to express my deep concern about the hurdles and difficulties that migrant workers are increasingly facing in certain receiving countries, difficulties that, in some cases, amount to flagrant violations of their fundamental human rights.

It is unfortunate to note that in many countries, including some developed countries, the rights of migrant workers are being neglected or simply forgotten. The worsening of the economic situation in these countries has been accompanied by a worsening of discriminatory actions and practices against the expatriates and the implementation of policies that frustrate the enjoyment of their hard-won rights, leading to their expulsion from countries where they have, for long, been making an honest living and to whose economy they have been making great contributions. The future of humankind cannot be seriously protected in the absence of values that are inherent to sincere and fraternal solidarity.

Human rights cannot be adequately promoted and protected if, in many countries, poverty persists and if their peoples continue to live on the periphery of development and their populations continue to endure the hardship of extreme poverty. Underdevelopment brews conditions conducive to generalized and persistent violations of the most fundamental rights of the human person, especially the rights of women and children. Indeed, the poverty and precarious living conditions generated by underdevelopment give rise to social and political instability, which, in the end, will have an enormous effect on international peace and security.

It therefore becomes imperative for us all to work towards effective cooperation for development in order to guarantee a minimum standard of human dignity and living conditions, thus breaking the chain of poverty and human

suffering. I hope that the answer to some of these concerns will be found during the World Summit for Social Development.

In this regard, the African countries are facing a particularly difficult economic and social situation. Affected by drought and desertification, confronted with the social and economic strangulation caused or worsened by many armed conflicts, marginalized by a system of economic and financial cooperation more prone to respond to the needs of other regions and countries, and torn by widespread poverty and the worsening of living conditions, the African countries are in dire need of urgent measures on the part of the international community to assist them in their necessary internal development efforts.

Against this background, I commend the timely initiative of the Japanese Government to promote the convening of an International Conference on African Development, set to take place this month in Tokyo. It is my sincerest hope that this Conference will produce the expected results. In this regard, developed countries should increase substantially the resources earmarked to support African countries in their development efforts, especially at a time when these countries have embarked on fundamental economic reforms, imprinting more dynamism on the private sector, promoting the economic diversification of their countries and introducing structural adjustments.

I share the views of those who advocate the need for the democratization of Africa. I would, however, like to emphasize that the promotion of democracy cannot be reduced simply to the setting up of formal democratic mechanisms and guarantees. Our own democratic experience in Cape Verde has taught us that, although democracy is the most desirable system of government and should, at all times, deserve our support, its consolidation and full acceptance by all the segments of the population require a favourable internal economic climate so as to have a positive impact on the creation of better living conditions for all.

I would like to seize this opportunity to emphasize the great interest that my country, as an island nation, attaches to the preparatory work for the First Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, which is to take place next year. It is my most fervent hope that this Conference, the first initiative on the implementation of the decisions and commitments undertaken in the framework of Agenda 21, will produce satisfactorily concrete results.

Cape Verde equally attaches utmost importance to the ongoing negotiations on the draft convention on desertification, in the implementation of a Rio Conference decision. Let us hope that this draft Convention will be concluded at an early date and will substantially contribute to the creation of the international mechanisms needed to deal effectively with the devastating effects of drought and desertification, which have been causing immense damage to the economy of the affected countries and to the global environment as well.

We are living a historic moment, a moment full of potential for a collective future of peace and development. While on the one hand we have lately been confronting painful realities and negative developments that have raised real concerns for those of us interested in the maintenance of international peace and security, on the other hand it is comforting and encouraging to note the profound positive changes that have taken place not only in inter-State relations but also, and especially, in the redefinition of our system of values which will, we hope, in peace and harmony guide nations in their internal as well as in their international relations in the coming decades.

We should seize the opportunity offered by the remaining few years of this century to act with determination and commitment with a view to consolidating democracy in the world, promoting human rights and, at the same time and with the same commitment and determination, recognizing that the foundation for a new world order can reside only in the development of countries and in cooperation amongst them in order to arrive at solutions to the global problems that affect us all.

This is my conviction as the Head of State of a small, peace-loving country that has always advocated dialogue among peoples and countries, and also as a citizen of this world, which I wish were more humane and more united.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Cape Verde for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Antonio Mascarenhas Monteiro, President of the Republic of Cape Verde, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

AGENDA ITEM 9 *(continued)*

GENERAL DEBATE

ADDRESS BY HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS SDECH KROM LUONG NORODOM RANARIDDH, FIRST PRIME MINISTER OF THE ROYAL GOVERNMENT OF CAMBODIA

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the First Prime Minister of the Royal Government of Cambodia.

His Royal Highness Sdech Krom Luong Norodom Ranariddh, First Prime Minister of the Royal Government of Cambodia, was escorted to the rostrum.

The PRESIDENT: I have pleasure in welcoming the First Prime Minister of the Royal Government of Cambodia, His Royal Highness Sdech Krom Luong Norodom Ranariddh, and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

Prince NORODOM Ranariddh (Cambodia): First of all, may I be permitted to join previous speakers in expressing deep sadness and sorrow at the loss of thousands of lives in Killari, India, as a result of the tragic earthquake on 30 September 1993. On behalf of the Government and people of Cambodia may I offer our profound condolences to the Government of India and to the relatives of the victims.

It is a privilege and an honour for me to address the General Assembly at their forty-eighth session as the First Prime Minister of the democratically elected Royal Government of Cambodia, where, in accordance with the mandate given to the Organization by the Paris Agreements of 23 October 1991, the United Nations has played a historic, decisive and successful role in ending 23 years of suffering and misery for our people.

May I express a warm welcome and congratulations to Mr. Samuel Insanally of the Republic of Guyana on his election as President of the United Nations General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. I am sure that Ambassador Insanally will lead the deliberations of this body to a successful conclusion.

I also wish to convey our warmest thanks and appreciation for the tireless work undertaken by his predecessor, Mr. Stoyan Ganev of the Republic of Bulgaria, for his judicious and capable management of the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session.

Cambodia welcomes Andorra, the Czech Republic, Eritrea, Monaco, the Slovak Republic and the Republic of Macedonia to this international body. Their decision to become Members of the United Nations will no doubt help to strengthen peace and security in the world.

On behalf of His Majesty, Norodom Sihanouk, King of Cambodia, of His Excellency, Mr. Hun Sen, Second Prime Minister of the Royal Government of Cambodia, and on behalf of our people, may I be permitted to express our profound and everlasting gratitude to Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, former Secretary-General of the United Nations; to Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, current Secretary-General of the United Nations; and to Mr. Yasushi Akashi, Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations in Cambodia, who are the artisans of the success of the United Nations operation in Cambodia, which has brought to our people peace, freedom, independence and the beginning of a period in which democracy will be established in our motherland.

Availing myself of this solemn opportunity, I should like to recall the important historic role played by Indonesia, France, Thailand, Japan and the People's Republic of China, which hosted crucial meetings on Cambodia that have led to the present positive results. I should like to express my deepest gratitude to the following eminent personalities, their Excellencies President Suharto and President François Mitterrand, Mr. Roland Dumas, Mr. Ali Alatas, Mr. Gareth Evans and Mr. Ahmed Rafeeuddin for their tireless contributions to the success of this precious peace process.

We are most gratified by the many congratulatory messages from Governments welcoming the promulgation of the new Constitution of Cambodia and the reaccession to the throne of His Majesty King Norodom Sihanouk. Last, but not least, the official recognition extended to the new, democratically elected Royal Government of Cambodia constitutes an act of justice, which to us is of great encouragement.

The success of the United Nations operation in Cambodia can be described as a combination of trust in the good will of the international community to save Cambodia and of the will of the whole Cambodian population to save its homeland.

The Cambodian people, by their participation, in huge numbers, in the free and fair elections held in our country last May, played a decisive role in sowing the seeds of democracy in Cambodia. His Majesty King Norodom Sihanouk, father of the Cambodian nation, played a crucial role in encouraging and nurturing national reconciliation among all Khmers, and provided firm support for the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) and for Mr. Yasushi Akashi, the leader of UNTAC. The steps taken by His Majesty ensured success for the last stage of the peace plan, including the drafting of our new Constitution and the orderly transfer of power.

I am indeed pleased to report that the peace process in Cambodia continues in accordance with the Paris Peace Agreements. The elections, in which, happily, huge numbers of my compatriots participated, were free and fair. Despite tremendous difficulties and constraints, the outcome was most encouraging for the future of democracy in Cambodia.

Cambodia's new Constitution, which was drafted by a sovereign Constituent Assembly, established a constitutional monarchy within the framework of a democratic and liberal political system, under which the people are the sole source of State power, and the judiciary is totally independent of the legislature and the executive. The constitutional monarchy represents the will of the people, expressed through their elected representatives in the constituent Assembly. Under the new Constitution, respect for human rights and individual freedoms has a key place.

Even though we have the same leadership as we had during the transitional period, when the provisional Government was in power, the establishment of the Royal Government of Cambodia will ensure the social stability and peace that are so necessary to enable us all to dedicate ourselves to the reconstruction and development of our homeland.

We still need a peaceful settlement of the Khmer Rouge problem. This problem must be resolved by the Cambodian people. We hope that a solution will be arrived at during the course of the November round-table discussions, at which His Majesty the King will preside. In this regard, the position of the Royal Government of Cambodia is perfectly clear: we are ready to welcome the Khmer Rouge group as advisers to the Royal Army and the Royal Government. However, we demand that, in return, the Khmer Rouge group assume the same responsibilities as were undertaken by the other three former parties that signed the Paris Agreements: that its administration be dismantled; that its armies and its zones become part of a single national entity, a unified and indivisible Cambodia whose territory and land and maritime borders are internationally recognized, as was the case in the 1960s; and that there be a central governmental structure consisting of a national Assembly, a Royal Government, Royal armed forces and a Royal Administration.

The international community should guarantee the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Cambodia. Indeed, a unique international guarantee is clearly enshrined in the text of the Agreement on a Comprehensive Political Settlement of the Cambodia Conflict of 23 October 1991, Part III, which is entitled "Agreement concerning the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and inviolability, neutrality and national unity of Cambodia".

The Royal Government of Cambodia solemnly pledges that it will scrupulously respect the relevant clauses of articles 1 and 3 of Part III of the Agreement. Cambodia requests that, in return, all signatories to the Paris Agreements of 23 October 1991 respect the clauses contained in articles 2, 4 and 5 of Part III.

The new Cambodia counts on all countries signatories to the Paris Agreements to

> "solemnly undertake to recognize and respect the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and inviolability, neutrality and national unity of Cambodia."

Notably, the parties must

> "refrain from interference, in any form whatsoever, whether direct or indirect, in the internal affairs of Cambodia."

The Royal Government of Cambodia urges that those countries which have not yet subscribed to the Paris Agreements of 23 October 1991 do so in order to help Cambodia and the Cambodian people, who have suffered so much, to maintain and reinforce this fragile peace. This is something that benefits not only Cambodia but the entire Asia-Pacific region. Maintenance of peace will be the sole guarantee of recovery and reconstruction in Cambodia.

(spoke in French)

We are determined to conclude this process, and we shall do so by ourselves. However, after 23 years of war and suffering, Cambodia is a devastated country. Thus, the new Cambodia needs aid and assistance from the international community. We pledge that we shall devote all our meagre human and financial resources and the extremely generous assistance of the international community to the reconstruction and rehabilitation of our devastated and impoverished country.

We welcome the great success of the Tokyo Ministerial Conference on the Rehabilitation and Reconstruction of Cambodia that took place in June 1992 and the success of the international conference on the reconstruction of Cambodia that was held in Paris last month. The success of both these conferences is an indication of the international community's great compassion for the Cambodian people, and we shall be for ever grateful.

The Royal Government of Cambodia is determined, with the help of the international community, to take all appropriate measures to meet this tremendous challenge. We are determined to respect and abide fully by the arrangements provided for in Part IV of the Paris Agreements of 23 October 1991 on the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Cambodia.

It is precisely because we are determined to achieve these objectives that His Majesty King Norodom Sihanouk, with the agreement of the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Representative for Cambodia, asks, through the Secretary-General and the Security Council:

First, a United Nations integrated office should be established in Cambodia.

Secondly, the offices of the specialized agencies, such as the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Food Programme, should be retained in Phnom Penh.

Thirdly, we should maintain the human rights component in Phnom Penh and expand it into a permanent human rights centre.

Fourthly, we should continue the demining operations within the framework of the Cambodian Mine Action Center.

Fifthly, we should actively maintain in Phnom Penh a team of military observers, who would help us to build confidence among the Cambodian people and would also serve as a guarantee against external threats.

The Royal Government of Cambodia wishes to draw the attention of the international community to the problem of the mines which have been laid throughout Cambodia. Current research shows that there are between 6 million and 10 million mines in Cambodian soil. The Royal Government requests the ongoing cooperation of the international community in removing as many of these mines as possible. In particular, we request assistance from the central database of the Cambodian Mine Action Centre, which is one of the most crucial aspects of the whole operation. The Cambodian Mine Action Centre has so far cleared over 3,883,230 square metres of minefield. The remaining task requires special equipment and a budget spanning the next 5 to 10 years. We hope that the international community can help us make our country safe for present and future generations.

Also, as a signatory to the 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, and as the Angkor monuments have been listed since December 1992 as a world heritage site, we request the international community to give unstinting assistance to the Royal Government of Cambodia in its struggle against the illicit traffic of Khmer cultural patrimony, which has been subject to unprecedented looting and vandalism. In order to recover these valuable cultural properties, we appeal to all countries which export such goods and through which they are transported - whether or not they have ratified the foregoing Convention - to adopt the following steps to help us. First, they should prevent national museums and similar institutions from acquiring any antiquities which are native to the Kingdom of Cambodia. Secondly, they should ban the import of these cultural properties as soon as they are legally listed in the inventories of Khmer national patrimony, if they are not legally licensed by the competent Cambodian authorities for export purposes. Thirdly, they should take all necessary steps to ensure that antique dealers and merchants of cultural resources assist the Royal Government of Cambodia in recovering and repatriating those cultural treasures illegally exported from the Kingdom of Cambodia.

The Royal Government of Cambodia wishes to express its deepest appreciation to the countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) for their past and ongoing efforts to help Cambodia and the Cambodian people

achieve peace, freedom and independence. We in Cambodia note with sincere admiration the tremendous development taking place in the countries of ASEAN, and we hope to learn much from their extensive experience.

Cambodia very much regrets that conflict has engulfed the former Yugoslavia, a country that always maintained close and friendly relations with us. We sincerely hope that the current negotiations will put an end to the suffering of the innocent people of the various regions of that unfortunate country.

Cambodia also regrets the renewal of conflicts in Somalia, Angola and Georgia. We hope that the intervention of the international community will put a swift end to these conflicts that have caused so much bloodshed.

Cambodia congratulates the Palestine Liberation Organization and the State of Israel for reaching initial agreement on some of the issues that have divided them for so many years and caused so much suffering to the Palestinian and Israeli peoples. We urge them to pursue their efforts to achieve permanent peace. My Government is thus pleased to announce that Cambodia has officially restored diplomatic relations with the State of Israel at the ambassadorial level.

Cambodia welcomes the progress achieved in the discussions between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States of America. We support the 10-point programme proposed by President Kim Il Sung for the peaceful reunification of Korea, and we also support the total nuclear disarmament of the Korean peninsula.

We have followed with satisfaction the positive developments in South Africa, where apartheid is being dismantled. We are aware that many obstacles remain and we hope that they can be removed without senseless violence and in peaceful and constructive cooperation between the black majority and the white minority.

(*spoke in English*)

Before I conclude, may I be permitted to pay profound homage to the courageous military and civilian personnel of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia, who have given their lives for the cause of peace in my country. Their names are enshrined deep in our hearts.

Cambodia's complex problems have been solved peacefully thanks to the tireless efforts of Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Secretary-General of the United Nations. The Royal Government and people of Cambodia salute him and highly commend and praise him for his just leadership in the crucial Cambodia conflict and for bringing it to a peaceful settlement.

The message the people of Cambodia have entrusted me to convey to the General Assembly is one of gratitude, of hope and of continuous cooperation with the international community with a view to strengthening peace, democracy and respect for human rights in Cambodia. We know that our task is huge, complex and by no means easy, but we pledge to do our utmost to bring it to a successful completion.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the First Prime Minister of the Royal Government of Cambodia for the statement he has just made.

His Royal Highness Sdech Krom Luong Norodom Ranariddh, First Prime Minister of the Royal Government of Cambodia, was escorted from the rostrum.

Mr. MORAVCK (Slovakia): I wish to convey my congratulations to Ambassador Insanally on his election as President of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. I wish him luck and success in his high office.

Let me also thank the President of the previous General Assembly session, Mr. Stoyan Ganev, for his effective guidance of its deliberations.

I would also like to express my profound appreciation to His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Secretary-General of the United Nations, for all his dynamic work in leading this organization.

A year has passed since I last had the honour to address the Assembly. As the last Minister of Foreign Affairs of the common State of Czechs and Slovaks, I asked representatives at the forty-seventh session for their understanding and support for the process of transformation taking place at that time in the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, and I reiterated the desire of the new successor States to be admitted to the international community of sovereign States on an equal basis.

In addition to its membership in the United Nations, the Slovak Republic today is a member of 53 international organizations, including United Nations specialized agencies,

the Council of Europe and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). We declared our interest in the fastest possible integration, together with other countries of the Visegrad Four, in such effective Euro-Atlantic political, security and economic organizations as the European Community, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Western European Union.

Slovakia is building its statehood on civic principles based on respect for individual rights. The objective of the Slovak Republic as a multi-ethnic State is to create a functioning system of ethnic coexistence and guarantees of equal rights and opportunities for all.

The President returned to the Chair.

The tragedies of Bosnia and Herzegovina and of Georgia alert us to inconsiderate and irresponsible attempts to gain political capital from nationalistic sentiments. We are against steps, regardless of their motivation, that would ultimately lead to the creation of ethnically pure territories and States and that would question or endanger the peaceful coexistence of populations of different ethnic origins. We apply the existing international norms regulating such peaceful coexistence and we favour their further elaboration. We support the idea of adopting a generally binding document on the rights of persons belonging to national, ethnic and other minorities in the United Nations, the CSCE and the Council of Europe. We are convinced that such a document must equally respect the territorial integrity of States and the principle of inviolability of existing borders.

Our economic policy aims to build a balanced and prosperous economy based on market principles. Thus far the reform measures have not brought the expected economic revival. The economic difficulties are aggravated by various internal and external factors, among others the conversion of the armaments industry. The 1990 decision on a far-reaching conversion led to the reduction of Slovakia's military production to an unprecedented 9 per cent of the 1989 level. This political decision to close a whole major branch of Slovak industry without the necessary preparation for a real conversion, though highly moral, did not take into account its economic and social consequences.

If we are to attain the necessary economic growth, we need access to the markets of developed nations, something which is increasingly complicated - all the more so because of the economic recession. We are convinced that protectionism is not a solution. We hope that negotiations on the further liberalization of world trade will be successful, in particular the negotiations of the current Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

We also feel encouraged by clear expressions of a political will to reform and remove export controls inherited from the cold war period that now unfairly burden legitimate commerce and unduly restrain growth and opportunities, as recently stated by President Clinton before this body.

Incidentally, on this very day, Slovak representatives are signing an association agreement between the Slovak Republic and the European Community in Luxembourg. The association agreement, which we consider the first step in our efforts to gain full membership in the Community, also reflects the general direction of our foreign policy. It encourages further positive development in our country, and we believe that it will help us resolve some of the aforementioned economic problems.

The international community is daily confronted with such tragedies as that in Bosnia and Herzegovina or Tajikistan, with countries at the crossroads, such as Russia today, but happily also with encouraging developments, such as those in the Middle East and in South Africa.

It is only natural that the United Nations adapt itself to the increased tasks in its mission as the guardian of international peace and security. To manage the ever-increasing load of responsibilities more effectively, it is necessary to pay attention to early warning and preventive action at an early stage. Equally demanding our attention today is the phase of post-conflict peace-building and restoration as a basis for preventing the renewal of conflicts.

Regarding the peace-keeping operations of the United Nations, common experience urges us to require improvements in their planning and execution. Every operation should have clearly defined political objectives, an unambiguous mandate, and an understanding of its possible and feasible scope and duration and of available means and support. When the Security Council sets up a new operation, it should define and ensure security and safety conditions and guarantees under which the operation is to be deployed. We support the idea of a universally binding legal instrument on the safety of peace-keeping operations personnel. Troop-contributing countries should also have the possibility, through some regular mechanism, of being constantly informed and consulted prior to and during the whole operation.

Another means of enhancing the effectiveness of peace-keeping is increased cooperation between the United Nations and regional arrangements, such as the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. In the Euro-Atlantic area, we should also seek involvement in peace-keeping of such organizations as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) or the Western European Union. All these organizations should be mandated in every specific case by the Security Council.

Slovakia is among the countries that have been most severely afflicted by the sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. We shall provide data on these losses shortly. We believe that the effort to secure effective economic assistance should not be limited to moral appeals to States and institutions. The economic situation of the countries depending on the Danube as their main waterway has been ever more aggravated by arbitrary acts of blockade and other violations of the respective United Nations resolutions and international conventions. We are convinced that such acts require a clear and resolute response.

The decision of the Geneva Conference on Disarmament on a mandate for a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty is a major move in itself. It also sends a signal to the whole non-proliferation regime. We support the universal and indefinite extension of the non-proliferation Treaty. We also hope that the question of the nuclear arsenal of the former Soviet Union will be satisfactorily and speedily resolved in the spirit of non-proliferation.

Slovakia welcomes the establishment of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, which we consider to be a first decisive step leading to increased global transparency and constraints in conventional weapons. We are ready to support moves towards enhanced transparency, as well as more detailed information on military holdings and procurement through national production, made under the banner of the United Nations, the Conference on Disarmament or the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Wishing to ensure full continuity with the activities of Czechoslovakia - an original member of the Conference on Disarmament - and enjoying the support of the Eastern European regional group, the Slovak Republic applied for membership in the Conference on Disarmament. A window of opportunity for Slovakia to become a member was opened by the proposal to gradually enlarge the membership of the Conference. Those on the proposed list of 23 new members should in our opinion be admitted as soon as possible.

The World Conference on Human Rights reaffirmed the universality of and respect for human rights and the need for their universal application. It also, appropriately, drew our attention to the vital interdependency of human rights and sustainable development, and their bearing on international peace and stability. We are prepared to support steps towards implementation of its recommendations. Slovakia therefore encourages the establishment of a post of United Nations high commissioner for human rights.

Recent developments in many areas of the world where civilian populations are increasingly the targets in predominantly non-international conflicts impel us to demand that States and parties to conflicts strictly observe and enforce the rules and principles of international humanitarian law. We support efforts to bring those who are alleged to have committed war crimes to justice, *inter alia* through the establishment of an international criminal court.

International humanitarian agencies and organizations, whose activities we highly esteem and support, can attest to another deplorable feature of today's world: the misuse and even the rejection of humanitarian assistance for political reasons. Those conducting humanitarian operations are working under increasingly unsafe conditions. The international community should demand respect for human rights and humanitarian norms by the States and parties to conflicts. Neither should we completely ignore the fact that sanctions which are rightfully applied against those who have breached international peace and security have a direct bearing on the fate and even the lives of innocent civilians. In a true humanitarian spirit, we should at least try to address this aspect of sanctions as well.

Furthermore, questions related to large-scale migration, refugees and displaced persons require our urgent attention. The international community should set forth appropriate rules and standards regulating large-scale population movements and seeking solutions for their root causes and consequences.

We also feel responsible for the most vulnerable segments of the world population - the women, the children, the disabled and the aged. We are ready to take part in the international community's efforts to seek means for addressing their needs and concerns.

The Slovak Republic is greatly interested in reinforcing the role of the United Nations and enhancing its effectiveness and capacity for action. We wish to join the ranks of those States that support the implementation of the reform process of the United Nations in order to transform it into a more effective and economical organization. Its organizational structure should respond more adequately to current global realities.

Slovakia is prepared to deliberate on proposals made by other members of the world community, including the proposal to restructure the Security Council, which should maintain its representativity and at the same time its transparent character. We are of the opinion that countries such as Germany and Japan should be invited to assume the responsibilities of permanent members of the Security Council. At the same time, the Slovak Republic observes that the number of States able to contribute - owing to their growing economic influence and role in world affairs - to the objectives of the United Nations is increasing. Any decision on the composition of the Security Council should be the result of a democratic discussion. An expansion of the Security Council must not jeopardize its effectiveness and operational capability.

The General Assembly itself, in our opinion, should also play a more important role within the United Nations system. The reform of the Economic and Social Council should continue, with a view to avoiding duplication between the Council and General Assembly agendas. Cost reductions can also be made in the activities of the United Nations Secretariat. When this issue is considered, it should be borne in mind that the Secretariat executes its tasks in response to the requirements of the Member States.

The reform of the United Nations should be carried out in the context of the financial situation of the Organization. We consider the change in the financing principles underlying the United Nations regular budget and the budget of peace-keeping operations to be one of the most significant aspects of this restructuring. The Member States should meet their financial obligations to the United Nations fully and in due time. We believe, however, that the rules for determining the contributions of Member States to the United Nations budget should be made more flexible in order to accommodate changes in the economies of individual Member States. The present economic reality, rather than history, should become the main and decisive criterion.

Let me conclude by wishing the General Assembly every success in the demanding work that is ahead of it at this session.

PROGRAMME OF WORK

The PRESIDENT: Before calling on the next speaker, I should like to inform delegations that I have received a letter dated 1 October 1993 from Mr. Ibrahim Gambari, Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid, requesting that the General Assembly take up consideration of agenda item 38, "Elimination of apartheid and establishment of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa", during the period of the general debate in order to consider a draft resolution on the lifting of all economic sanctions against South Africa.

The request has been submitted following a ministerial meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on Southern Africa of the Organization of African Unity on 29 September 1993, which called on the international community to respond positively to the appeal for the lifting of sanctions.

In the light of the request by the Chairman of the Special Committee, I intend to hold consultations with a view to bringing the matter before the General Assembly as quickly as possible, without, however, disrupting the work of the Assembly during the general debate.

The request by the Chairman of the Special Committee, which has been supported by the Chairman of the Group of African States, for early consideration of a draft resolution on the lifting of all economic sanctions against South Africa is, of course, without prejudice to the scheduling of the consideration of the agenda item on apartheid later in the session.

AGENDA ITEM 9 *(continued)*

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. ABREU (Uruguay) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: Mr. President, Uruguay wishes to express its satisfaction, and its trust in you, upon your election as President of the General Assembly and as a representative of our region. Your capabilities are recognized by all, and your sense of impartiality and justice are the best guarantee of success in the important work entrusted to us.

We also wish to congratulate the Secretary-General on his work over the last year, which was clearly described in his report to the General Assembly. His personal leadership and decisiveness certainly contribute to international peace and security.

Finally, we are happy to welcome the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Monaco, Eritrea and Andorra as new Member States. We are pleased to see this confirmation of the Organization's dedication to universality and openness, as given form in Article 4 of the Charter, to which Uruguay has always adhered.

Ideological concepts are today lagging behind a reality that persists in reaffirming the validity of freedom as a point of reference in every effort to regain and preserve human dignity. The great challenge of our time is to find a collective answer to the dizzying changes that are occurring as this century comes to its close. The technological revolution and the spread of democracy are the two factors that will empower humankind in its most genuine flowering.

In the political field, the new international order that we are seeing emerge is nourished by the fall of political and military blocs, the collapse of ideological borders and a deepening of disarmament. Cooperation is replacing confrontation. The elements of power are being reallocated in the light of the new variables that offer a renewed challenge to the multilateral organizations in the international arena.

In the economic field, technological development has replaced traditional comparative advantages with competitiveness and excellence. Quality is the basis for the production of goods and services. These trends, if stripped of their human element, would be little more than a materialistic expression lacking the necessary sense of solidarity. A new order cannot be summed up simply as a reallocation of the outward expressions of power. The global nature and the interdependence that characterize international relations today find their ethical content and legal expression in the continuing validity of the fundamental principles of international law.

In this context, we are facing today new horizons and better prospects for understanding between nations. In this respect, we hail with particular satisfaction the peace reached in the Middle East between the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, and we welcome it as an example and symbol of the new era of cooperation which nations must carry forward on the threshold of the new century.

Also, within the Latin American region, Uruguay is pleased to point to the consolidation of the peace processes in El Salvador and Guatemala. This has been achieved through the efforts made by their peoples and Governments, with the constant support of the international community. The practice of direct diplomacy, with mechanisms for political consultation and coordination, has been successful. In this context, Uruguay wishes to stress the role played by the Organization of American States in the grave crises suffered by Peru, Guatemala and Haiti.

We can add little to a diagnosis on which we all agree. Our responsibility lies in our capacity to propose solutions, both in our own domestic spheres and internationally; this is a challenge that every generation faces, taking national feelings as the basis for a leap forward towards prosperity and the expression of the international community as a basis for the credibility that nurtures the hopes of the great dispossessed majorities.

Uruguay wishes here to emphasize three particularly important issues: the relationship between international trade, development and political stability; the new articulation of the concept of collective security; and, lastly, the problems of human rights and the environment as part of broadening the concept of integral development.

The dissoluble interdependence between development and political stability is obvious. Freedom in its most complete expression admits of no ambiguous interpretation. And, just as human rights cannot be subject to the whims of Governments, neither can free trade be limited by the pressures of national or sectoral interests. Political freedom and free trade are two sides of the same coin.

The opening of markets between developed and developing countries cannot therefore be seen as a zero-sum exercise; rather, it is an undertaking of benefit to all. Greater competitiveness powers the process that begins with growth, is strengthened by a better distribution of wealth and is consolidated by the credibility of democracy and its institutions. This shared responsibility makes no allowance for double-talk from any side.

In our capacity as Chairman of the Negotiating Committee of the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) at the ministerial level, we wish to express our concern over the obstacles in the way of

concluding the Round. After seven long years of negotiations, certain trends continue to obstruct the multilateralization process. Bilateral negotiations are curtailing opportunities for reaching a comprehensive, balanced result that takes into account all the interests at stake, and particularly those of the developing countries, in accordance with GATT's own norms.

For several years now Uruguay has been working hard to make structural adjustments in its economy. Policies to make trade more open, both domestically and internationally, have been put in place with the aim of modernizing the industrial sector, facilitating technological innovation and increasing competitiveness so as to achieve, in the final analysis, a more efficient integration into the world economy and world trade.

Deregulation of production, reform and modernization of the public sector as well as strict fiscal adjustments aimed at balancing the use of the country's financial and monetary resources have supplemented external liberalization policies which have placed us among those who have reduced tariff and non-tariff barriers at the fastest rate.

This great effort of adjustment carried out by Uruguay - in a similar fashion to many other developing countries - has been achieved not only in the framework of deep social, economic and political difficulties, but has also been undertaken unilaterally without any compensation at all from its partners in the international system, especially the more developed countries.

Thus Uruguay emphasizes once again its firmest rejection of all protectionist policies which continue to be applied by some highly industrialized countries. These are clearly incompatible with the rules of GATT and with the status quo commitments agreed at the beginning of the Uruguay Round. At the same time, they are a disincentive for the efforts made in the framework of democracy to strengthen institutions and to have an appropriate social dialogue.

It is disquieting to witness the behaviour of many countries which preach the virtues and benefits of the free market and economic liberalism but at the same time close their borders to trade from countries whose well-being depends to a significant degree on access to such markets.

Therefore, Uruguay calls once again and most emphatically on all nations, especially the major trading partners, to make possible a successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round negotiations, in which comprehensiveness and balance are values to be preserved in a strengthened multilateral framework.

In this context, Uruguay also believes that regional integration is the best path towards international participation. Today nothing can be done individually. Interrelationships exist between large economic blocs; no country can escape that reality.

The creation of economic blocs must be interpreted as a consequence of a process of integration and liberalization of world markets. Blocs are a tangible approximation, an intermediate step, to the goal of free trade, the ultimate goal of GATT. Furthermore, this is the thrust of Uruguay's resolute participation in the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR) and of the integration efforts of the North American Free Trade Agreement, the Group of Three, the Andean Pact and the bilateral agreements within the Latin American Integration Association.

Uruguay recognizes that the new concept of international security includes institutional, legal and political aspects. From an institutional standpoint, we must avoid extensive use of the powers of the Security Council based on a sense of pragmatism that might undermine the criteria governing the delicate balance between the main organs of the United Nations. The disappearance of bipolarity enables a new political reality to pervade the Council's decisions. If, on the one hand, the traditional situations caused by the cold war have been unblocked, on the other hand, there must be careful control of the trend towards possible excesses of power by those nations enjoying a privileged situation. Uruguay shares the thoughts of the Secretary-General expressed in paragraph 80 of his document "An Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277):

> "The powerful must resist the dual but opposite calls of unilateralism and isolationism if the United Nations is to succeed."

The General Assembly must reassert its authority on the basis of the Articles of the Charter which define its functions and powers. In the area of peace and security, the General Assembly's constitutional limitations are set out in Articles 12, 24 and 36 of the Charter. These we abide by. Nevertheless, its primacy is clear in the economic and social areas.

To revitalize the General Assembly is to identify its original mandate, reaffirming its areas of authority and giving this organ, in which we are all permanently represented, stronger involvement in the Organization's

activities. This is the way to contribute to equity and the balance of power established by the Charter. We also believe in strengthening the International Court of Justice, both in its administrative and consultative functions.

What I have said does not weaken our support for adapting the Security Council to the new international reality by reforming its composition and working methods. This process must gain general consensus and respect the principle of the sovereign equality of States. Only in this way can we ensure greater representation, transparency and efficiency.

We also believe that all this energy for renewal must be injected appropriately into the Organization's bureaucracy. The United Nations is the sum of its organs, including its specialized agencies. An improvement in efficiency must go hand in hand with possible global transformations. We must strive to rationalize our operational systems in order to streamline administrative procedures, which often amass through inertia hundreds of initiatives which wander aimlessly, at great cost, through the machinery of an insatiable bureaucracy.

International security also finds its most genuine expression in strict compliance with international law. In this context, which is fraught with uncertainty and unpredictable events, the principles of self-determination, non-intervention, the peaceful settlement of disputes and the observance of good faith in the fulfilment of international obligations must be interpreted not as concepts that are vague or not properly drawn up by a naive legal system, but as the pillars of international relations.

It is also out of political realism and pragmatism that Uruguay turns to the law as the main shield for its defence. Our former Ambassador to the United Nations, Dr. Carlos María Velázquez, has said that the small countries

> "need to know, for reasons of our true national interest, how far we can go and - most important - where we can be taken. Respect for the law and international behaviour that follows legal rules are the only path towards a consolidation of the values of culture, freedom and dignity."

Uruguay, true to its tradition, continues to interpret Article 51 of the Charter strictly and continues to claim the compensation to which it is entitled under Article 50 as a consequence of the losses caused by the Gulf War. It does so not only for material reasons, but because it believes that collective security is based on the credibility of the rules that regulate it.

Just as Uruguay is a jealous guardian of the principles of international law, it is genuinely open to all those undertakings which, in fulfilment of an international mandate, constitute an indispensable contribution to world peace and security. Thus, we believe that peace-keeping operations are an essential part of the multilateral policy of the United Nations, without prejudice to the necessary efforts being made in the field of preventive diplomacy.

Mr. Nyakyi (United Republic of Tanzania), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Uruguay has increased the number of armed forces personnel placed at the disposal of the United Nations. The numbers are highly significant in relation to the country's population and the size of its military. It has also expressed to the Secretary-General its readiness to host regional training centres for United Nations peace-keeping forces.

Our armed forces adopt a professional approach to peace-keeping missions, in which they are representatives of the international community. It gives them satisfaction to see their efforts contributing to establishing peace between States and to regional and national reconciliation, as in Cambodia, where, at last, democratic values and respect for human rights prevail.

We are concerned, however, over the risk of these operations' being discontinued because of delays in the payment of countries' contributions. It would be contrary to the principle of universality if, owing to these difficulties, only countries with vast financial resources could participate in such operations.

We believe that this policy of collective security must be supplemented by a policy of disarmament and a universal ban on nuclear weapons. The signing of international non-proliferation agreements and the adoption of the Convention banning chemical weapons, which was signed in Paris last January, constitute progress in this field - progress that we endorse. We are also pleased to highlight the contribution of our neighbours Argentina, Brazil and the Republic of Chile through their implementation of regional agreements aimed at ensuring the peaceful use of nuclear energy and the non-proliferation of all types of weapons of mass destruction.

Stability and balance are threatened by poverty on a vast scale - widespread and critical poverty. Social

development implies giving priority to social expenditure, but only where this is made possible by real growth, allowing for a reduction of the voluntary sector that is developing in many of our societies. Collective security, as well as ethics, must be taken into account in our approach to this entire problem. Uruguay therefore attaches great importance to Chile's welcome initiative in the convening of the World Summit for Social Development, to be held in 1995. This will provide a great opportunity for serious study of the scope of the concept of social development.

The ultimate beneficiaries of the integral development of the nations of the international community must be man and his environment. We therefore wish to highlight here the importance of action on issues related to human rights and preservation of the environment.

At present, technology and international peace and security are based on a narrow interpretation of the concept of human rights. Words and speeches are useless if, as President Clinton suggested, while we are gathered at this General Assembly thousands of children in the world are dying of hunger. What of the essence of democracy can we rescue if, as in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in many other places, we look on helplessly as people indulge in behaviour that we thought had been eradicated for ever?

The concept of human rights - their intrinsic worth and nature - is not affected by political, religious, sectional or even State interests or considerations. The ethical heritage of contemporary international society cannot allow concessions in the defence of these rights and principles. Any concession would affect the credibility of the institutions and values of freedom and human dignity as the bases of democracy.

During the Vienna World Conference on Human Rights, the States parties solemnly reaffirmed their commitment to promoting respect for and protection of those rights. In this context, our country supports the establishment of a high commissioner for human rights, in the framework of the international system.

Moreover, Uruguay repeats President Lacalle's statement to the Secretary-General of our country's willingness to help in the evacuation of children who are innocent victims of hatred and intolerance. We hope that inertia will not prevail over political decisions or human sensitivity. Those who suffer and die in the midst of collective insanity must not be held hostage to bureaucratic structures. If this happens, the documents approved at the World Summit for Children in September 1990 will have been relegated to the rhetorical scrapheap of its meetings.

Integral development implies careful consideration of the problems of the environment. The concept of sustainable development requires a link between environmental issues and economic and social issues. In this context, States must undertake bilateral and multilateral commitments, by means of conventions, going beyond mere statements. This is also an aspect of the North-South dialogue and of action to deal with the conflicts of interests that it entails. Uruguay has incorporated in a cross-border agreement with Brazil the concept of responsibility for environmental degradation. It wishes to reiterate the need to establish a legal system to resolve environmental disputes through codification of international environmental law, in the spirit of the resolution adopted at the Rio Summit in 1992.

Finding a way to force States to accept responsibility for non-compliance with the rules for protection of the environment continues to be the basis for a fair relationship between the industrialized countries and the developing countries.

Such are the main issues of concern to Uruguay. In the framework of all the ambivalence, all the areas of light and shadow in the international arena, we are taking part in this session of the General Assembly - as we have done since the foundation of the United Nations - in the hope that deeds will be shown to be more eloquent than words.

Mr. AL-THANI (Qatar) *(interpretation from Arabic)*: It gives me great pleasure to begin my statement by congratulating Mr. Insanally of Guyana on his election as President of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session - the "session of peace". This choice reflects the confidence of Member States in his political ability and diplomatic skill and their regard for his country. He will have our full cooperation and support. We are confident that, with his experience and wisdom, he will lead us to success in our work.

I should like also to express to Mr. Insanally's predecessor, Mr. Stoyan Ganev, our deep appreciation and gratitude for the excellent manner in which he conducted the work of the General Assembly during its forty-seventh session.

It also gives me great pleasure to welcome, in the name of the State of Qatar, all the States that recently joined this

international Organization, which, session after session, has reaffirmed its universal character. We look forward to the contribution of these States in an Organization that represents all nations of the world, without exception.

On this occasion, I should like to convey to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, my Government's deep appreciation for his commitment and dedication to the principles of the United Nations, for the political ability and diplomatic skill that he has demonstrated, since he assumed this high position, in dealing with international problems and crises, and for his unremitting efforts, his discernment and his farsightedness in revitalizing this world Organization so that it may face up to the challenges posed by a changing world and achieve peace on earth. This is reflected in part by his praiseworthy report entitled "Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277), which contains important proposals in the areas of preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping.

The new phase the world has embarked on after the end of the cold war and the emergence of new complexities in international relations, side by side with the deterioration of the economic situation, especially in developing countries, now face the United Nations with new burdens and responsibilities, which necessitate the restructuring and revitalization of the Organization in order for it to be able to meet successfully the demands of a changing world. As such restructuring and revitalization should include the activities of the United Nations in the areas of security and social and economic development, the State of Qatar believes that it is necessary to consider an increase in the membership of the Security Council in order to make the Council more representative of the international community, since the number of Member States in the Organization has risen, on the one hand, and the balance of power and economic weight of some States have changed, on the other. Such an increase should include both permanent and non-permanent members of the Security Council, and there should be adequate representation of each of the five continents. It is necessary, however, that the membership of the Council should remain within the manageable limits that may enable it to maintain its effectiveness in dealing with world crises that are constantly increasing in gravity.

Since the end of cold war and the disappearance of East-West confrontation, major steps have been taken towards arms limitation at the international level. Nuclear arsenals have been reduced, nuclear tests have been frozen, a Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, has been opened for signature and Qatar was among the first to sign it. In this respect, however, I should like to stress a very important point, namely that arms limitation, particularly with respect to weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, should be given a high priority in the interests of the peace and stability of the States of the region so that the funds released thereby may be channelled to development and the achievement of economic and social progress. This, however, must apply to all the States of the region without exception. Consequently, it is my country's view that it is important for all the States of the Middle East, without exception, to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Qatar supports all initiatives aimed at making the Middle East a region free from all nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction and their systems of delivery, especially as we enter upon a new era of peace which, by its nature, contradicts the very idea of developing and stockpiling weapons of mass destruction.

The State of Qatar is very much concerned about the international economic situation, believing that a stable international economic situation is the cornerstone for the building of a new world order that could be characterized by stability, security and prosperity. We are particularly concerned about the economic situation of developing countries, most of which are suffering from a heavy burden of indebtedness, the service of which exhausts a large portion of their limited resources which are hardly sufficient to meet the needs of their struggling peoples. We therefore believe that addressing the problem of indebtedness is the first essential step towards strengthening the economies of those countries. We know that there are numerous studies and propositions on this issue, but what is needed more are the political will and genuine desire on the part of rich creditor States to solve once and for all the problem of indebtedness in favour of developing countries, particularly the African least-developed countries. Needless to say, continuing civil wars in the countries of the third world and conflicts among them have taken a heavy toll in the case of those countries and their economies. Among those countries are those of the Gulf region which have had their share of suffering because of recent crises and events in the Middle East.

The security and stability of the Gulf region are the foremost objectives that the State of Qatar seeks to achieve by its efforts and contacts. Security and stability, as we all know, are important not only to the States of the region, but also to the entire world because of the region's strategic importance and its energy resources that the world needs. The State of Qatar believes that this security and stability cannot be achieved other than by cooperation between the

States of the region themselves on the basis of good neighbourliness, mutual respect, non-interference in internal affairs, respect for sovereignty and independence, respect for recognized international borders and for the agreements concluded among themselves, and the settlement of differences and of disputes by peaceful means, particularly through negotiation, mediation and international adjudication.

From this perspective, the State of Qatar supports all efforts being made to solve the dispute over the three islands of Abu Mousa, Greater Tunb and Smaller Tunb between the United Arab Emirates and the Islamic Republic of Iran through negotiation and by other peaceful means, in the hope that these peaceful efforts will result in settling all outstanding issues between the two States. In this connection, we welcome the recent statements by officials of both countries in which they expressed their desire to resolve the dispute by peaceful means through bilateral channels.

By the same token, the State of Qatar reiterates its full support for the sovereignty of the State of Kuwait and its territorial integrity within its international boundaries as demarcated by Security Council resolution 833 (1993) on the Kuwait-Iraq boundaries. The State of Qatar also reaffirms its concern for the preservation of the territorial integrity of Iraq and calls upon the United Nations and the international community to alleviate the suffering of the Iraqi people, especially in basic civilian and humanitarian areas. This requires full compliance by Iraq with all the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, first among which is resolution 687 (1991) in all its provisions.

The State of Qatar is following with great interest the successive and positive developments in the march towards peace in the Middle East. These developments in our opinion turn a new page in the history of the region. We have welcomed the agreement reached by the Palestine Liberation Organization and Israel concerning self-government in the Gaza Strip and Jericho, as a first step towards a just, complete and lasting solution to the Palestinian question and the Arab-Israeli conflict on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), the principle of land for peace, full Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories including the holy city of Al-Quds and the Golan Heights, southern Lebanon as well as the occupied Jordanian territories, and the implementation of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people, including the right of self-determination. This will lay the foundation for security and stability in the Middle East. In this respect, Qatar reiterates its continued support for the peace efforts undertaken according to and on the basis of the principles agreed upon. It looks forward to seeing the ongoing negotiations make fundamental and parallel progress on all tracks. Short of this, no real peace, in our view, could be achieved in the region.

We also follow with hope and admiration the efforts by our sister country, Lebanon, towards political stability, security and reconstruction. The State of Qatar will spare no effort in supporting Lebanon's sovereignty and sharing in the reconstruction of that country in response to the call of brotherhood. In this context, Qatar calls for full and unconditional implementation of Security Council resolution 425 (1978).

The State of Qatar, which condemns terrorism in any shape or form, values greatly the question of human rights. This stems from Qatar's belief in the dignity of man and its adherence to the eternal principles of Islamic Sharia, which uphold the right of the individual to a decent life of freedom, justice, peace, brotherhood and the equality of all men. Given this belief, Qatar views human rights as a high moral value that should not be used as a means of or a pretext for interference in the internal affairs of other States, and an issue that should not be addressed by varying standards that differ from the case of one State to the other. In view of the universal character of human rights, their basic principles should include the right to self-determination and the inherent link between human rights and the right to development. In view of the fact that each society has its own customs, traditions, culture and principles which it cherishes and adheres to in line with its creed and outlook, consideration should be given to the historical and cultural frameworks of the Arab and Islamic world as well as to those of other cultures and civilizations. Here I should like to point out with justified pride that Islam, 14 centuries ago, upheld the right of the individual to live in peace, freedom and dignity. This is the true picture of human rights in Islam.

The international community, as represented by the General Assembly and the Security Council, has condemned the Serbian aggression in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the unprecedented practice of "ethnic cleansing" of which the Bosnian Muslim people was the victim. But what use condemnation? Condemnation has had no effect whatsoever, as it has not been backed by action: the successive resolutions adopted by the Security Council have remained ineffective; aggression did not stop; "ethnic cleansing" continued, the safe areas have not been safe and even relief assistance did not reach the people in the besieged cities and areas. Yet, the Security Council has

not taken the necessary steps to enforce compliance with its resolutions as it has done in other cases. Even the arms embargo the Council imposed on the former Yugoslavia was not lifted in the case of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina regardless of the fact that lifting it would enable the Bosnians to exercise their legitimate right of self-defence; nor were the offers of some Islamic States to send forces to take part in protecting the safe areas accepted. Now, if this painful situation does not change and if the necessary measures to enforce these resolutions are not taken, history will record our disgraceful failure to uphold the principles of the Charter and to force aggressors to respect the norms of international legality. Besides, we must not forget that it is important not to allow such grave violations to continue to be committed with impunity. These violations are crimes against humanity and, therefore, the State of Qatar fully supports the resolution relating to the establishment of the International Tribunal to prosecute war crimes in the former Yugoslavia.

The State of Qatar follows with great interest the developments in the Russian Federation. We hope that that Federation will overcome its crises so that it may continue to perform its important role in resolving global crises in its capacity as a permanent member of the Security Council, a co-sponsor of the peace negotiations in the Middle East and a participant that has taken significant steps in the area of limiting nuclear armaments.

Qatar supports the United Nations operation in our sister country, Somalia, and welcomes the determination of the world Organization to continue this operation, which aims at restoring peace and security in that country and at the reconstruction of its State institutions in spite of all the difficulties. We call upon the Somali leaderships to continue the process of national reconciliation, to support the United Nations efforts, to play their role in the process of political reconstruction and to refrain from doing anything that would obstruct that process.

The State of Qatar follows with interest the historic positive developments taking place in the Republic of South Africa, and welcomes the progress that has been made towards the final dismantling of the hideous system of apartheid and the establishment of a democratic system for the first time in the history of that country. While welcoming these important developments in the political arena in this Republic, Qatar supports the call by Mr. Nelson Mandela, president of the African National Congress, for lifting the economic sanctions imposed on his country and from which its people have been suffering for years. This, in our opinion, would promote the democratic process and consolidate economic development in that country.

Stability of the situation in South-East Asia was among the positive results we have witnessed in the peaceful settlement of conflicts. This was achieved by resolving the conflict in Cambodia, drafting the new constitution and restoring the monarchy. This peace was achieved after long years of persistent struggle under the leadership of Norodom Sihanouk for establishing peace and security in the country and restoring its territorial integrity and its sovereignty over its whole territory. In this connection, we commend the continuous efforts made by the United Nations and its Secretary-General, efforts that paved the way for elections and led to success of the peace process in Cambodia.

The last decade has witnessed increasing interest in environmental issues at both the official and popular levels. Indeed, the environment has become a high priority on the agendas of States and an integral part of their national interests and security. This is a positive and necessary development. It is, however, most important in this respect to identify precisely the sources of pollution and the relationship between the environment and economic development. The imposition of an energy tax at the present time would limit the possibilities of development in the State of Qatar and other oil-exporting States. It would affect adversely their ability to meet their obligations and limit their ability to finance the exploration and production operations that would enable them as producers to satisfy the increasing demand on oil. In an independent world, such negative effects will not be limited to the oil-exporting countries but will extend to other countries and to other economic sectors all over the world. It is obvious that the idea of an energy tax on exporting countries is unfair both in its proposed rates on the sources of environmental pollution and in comparison with other sources of pollution, such as coal. The negative environmental effects of the use of coal far exceed those of the use of oil. Notwithstanding such facts, however, we find that the tax rates have been proposed in the reverse ratio to the effects of the pollutants. On the other hand, the proposed tax does not take into consideration the amount of pollution caused by every individual State. A single major industrial country may very well pollute the environment to a far greater extent than any number of oil-producing countries put together. Regardless of this, however, the tax targets the latter in a manner that suggests objectives other than the preservation of the environment.

It is no exaggeration to state that the world we all live in faces numerous challenges. The economic, social and

political problems which face many countries in today's world have become so enormous and so complex that they may well seem intractable. However, if we let ourselves be guided by the spirit of the Charter and the principles of our world Organization, and if we stand as one behind the United Nations, we are bound to find proper solutions to those problems, which have become a common denominator to all the States of the world. There is no other way but to work harder in the context of world solidarity and international cooperation towards the building of a world wherein the lights of peace, security, stability and well-being would shine brightly.

The President returned to the Chair.

ADDRESS BY MR. KENNEDY A. SIMMONDS, PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Saint Kitts and Nevis.

Mr. Kennedy A. Simmonds, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Saint Kitts and Nevis, was escorted to the rostrum.

The PRESIDENT: I have great pleasure in welcoming the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Saint Kitts and Nevis, His Excellency the Honourable Mr. Kennedy A. Simmonds, and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

Mr. SIMMONDS (Saint Kitts and Nevis): I am extremely pleased to bring warm and cordial greetings from the Government and people of Saint Kitts and Nevis. It is indeed with a profound sense of pleasure and honour that I address this, the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

First, I should like to express my sincere congratulations and appreciation to the outgoing President, Mr. Stoyan Ganev, for the very proficient and skilful manner in which he handled last year's deliberations.

I hasten to extend to you, Sir, our new President, a very hearty welcome. Your presence in the Chair is a source of great joy and pride to all of us from the Caribbean. I know that you will bring your vast experience and great skill to bear on these proceedings. I wish to assure you of my country's continued support and willing cooperation.

I should also like to commend most highly our Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, whose commitment to the furtherance of the cause of peace, equality, freedom and democracy world wide stands out as a testament to hope and prosperity in a time of conflict and social chaos.

Last week the world was shocked by the tragedy of the earthquake which caused such extensive loss of life in India. I extend condolences to the Government and people of India on behalf of the Government and people of Saint Kitts and Nevis. I know that the world community will continue to respond in appropriate measure with timely assistance.

My Government regrets the startling and violent events that have been occurring in Russia over the past few days, and we express the hope that peace will quickly return and that democracy will indeed come to the people of Russia.

On 19 September my country, Saint Kitts and Nevis, celebrated the tenth anniversary of our independence. On 23 September it was 10 years since I had in this Hall announced our nation to the world, indicating the principles that would guide our participation in world affairs and the objectives that we would pursue. The principles enunciated then are timeless and unchanging, and I can only ask the Assembly to revisit them with me as I quote:

> "The rights and freedoms embodied in the Constitution of Saint Kitts and Nevis reflect our commitment to the sanctity of human life, and of human dignity, the rights of the individual, and the non-violent pursuit of happiness." (*A/38/PV.3, p. 41*)

At that time the East and the West stood precariously balanced on the brink of the total nuclear annihilation of the human species. Today the world breathes a collective sigh of relief as the process of reducing nuclear armaments is genuinely proceeding.

Initially Saint Kitts and Nevis refused to sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Our position was a principled one, because while we supported the objective of stemming the spread of nuclear weapons among countries, we felt that in practical terms it would be meaningless unless those countries with the largest stockpiles of nuclear weapons made meaningful reductions in their arsenals.

Saint Kitts and Nevis has now signed the Treaty. I call on all countries with nuclear weapons or the capacity to make them to join in the global effort for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

Our attention is focused now on conventional conflicts in various arenas. The fighting and the attendant atrocities reported from the theatre of conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina represent a serious affront to every principle of human sanctity and human dignity that we share within this body of nations. The United Nations is endeavouring to fulfil a humanitarian mission, but we must redouble our efforts to bring an end to the fighting. We cannot but express our condemnation and abhorrence at the atrocity of "ethnic cleansing" being attempted in that theatre of conflict. The Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis appeals to all the parties involved in this brutal conflict to heed the call of the international community to broker a peaceful settlement and to respect the efforts of the United Nations to implement effective programmes aimed at ending the civil war and at providing humanitarian assistance to those victims caught in the crossfire.

My Government commends the efforts of the United Nations in delivering humanitarian assistance to the people of Somalia who face the threat of disease, hunger, starvation and imminent death. At the same time, my Government deplores the barbarous attacks on United Nations personnel deployed in Somalia by forces loyal to Somali factions. We would also like to add our voice in protest against the killing of 23 Pakistani peace-keeping soldiers, and others subsequently. Although we would wish to see the perpetrators punished, it is our hope that the United Nations will remain faithful to its original mandate to keep the peace and feed the hungry.

My country looks forward to an early end and a permanent solution that will permit the process of development to be resumed. We sincerely hope that this crisis does not threaten the prospects for peace in the Horn of Africa.

Elsewhere in Africa hope has come alive. I refer in particular to the developments in South Africa. The Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis welcomes the announcement of the prospects of non-racial and multi-party elections scheduled to take place in South Africa in April 1994. The Caribbean has always been unambiguous and emphatic in its condemnation of apartheid. There is no doubt that our commitment and our principled stand has contributed to the inevitable dismantling of the unjust system of apartheid.

We are at the threshold of a new South Africa which offers to its people an unprecedented opportunity to write a new chapter in the history of South Africa whereby the eradication of apartheid could lead to the creation of a new, united, non-racial and democratic society. We are extremely encouraged by the progress in the negotiations taking place between the Government of F. W. de Klerk, Nelson Mandela of the African National Congress (ANC), and members of other political parties in South Africa. While there are still major difficulties, we call upon all parties to seize this opportunity to bring peace and freedom to all South Africans.

However, Member Governments must maintain their vigilance until the Transitional Executive Council has been established, with the proper terms of reference clearly outlined and defined, to allow for the integration and active participation of all races within the developmental and governmental process of that country. But Saint Kitts and Nevis supports Nelson Mandela's call for the removal of sanctions at this time.

The involvement and influence of the United Nations in conflict resolution have been outstanding in recent times. In this regard, my delegation wishes to applaud the timely efforts of the United Nations and the Organization of American States (OAS) to bring the relevant parties in the Haitian crisis to the negotiating table. My Government welcomes the Governors Island Agreement brokered by the United Nations, which resulted in talks between President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and the military high command in Haiti. The appointment and installation of Prime Minister Malval, who was chosen by President Aristide, was a significant achievement.

The international community must provide support and security to ensure the safe return of President Aristide, following which a major development offensive, with institution-building, must be mounted and sustained. Haiti must be given the same high priority as is accorded to other areas of conflict or poverty in the world.

Changes in international affairs are taking place with a startling rapidity and suddenness that could not possibly have been predicted. Who would have expected the surprising but very welcome *rapprochement* between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), which now offers a genuine prospect for peace in the Middle East? The peace prospect is obviously very fragile, but we must all support it and give it every opportunity to prosper. The realities of the present world situation call not for a hardening of traditional attitudes, but for a genuine search

for solutions, even if they require unprecedented approaches and compromises.

Also in relation to that region, we welcome the finalization of the demarcation of the boundary between Kuwait and Iraq, which was accomplished by the Iraq-Kuwait Boundary Demarcation Commission on 20 May 1993. We also welcome the adoption by the Security Council of its resolution 833 (1993), in which it guaranteed the inviolability of the boundary between the two States. We expect that this guarantee will serve as a deterrent against future conflict between Kuwait and Iraq, and also enhance stability and security in the region. Iraq is called upon to respect the terms of Security Council resolution 833 (1993) and other relevant Security Council resolutions.

Who would have predicted the fall of the Berlin Wall and the reunification of East and West Germany? Who would have predicted the breakup of the Soviet Union and the subsequent United Nations membership of a large number of new sovereign States? The United Nations has been in the midst of it all. We have welcomed the membership of North and South Korea, ideological differences notwithstanding. And we support their efforts towards reunification.

It is clear that membership in the United Nations is neither a deterrent to reunification, as we saw in the case of Germany, nor to fragmentation, as we saw in the case of the Soviet Union. Whatever the aspirations of a country's people, as determined by that people, these can be accommodated within the framework and forum of the United Nations, which is more effective as an organ operating by a process of inclusion than one operating by a process of exclusion.

In that context, my Government calls on the United Nations to begin the process that would eventually lead to the admission of the Republic of China on Taiwan into this Organization. The Republic of China on Taiwan has proved itself to be a country that espouses the principles inherent in the United Nations Charter, a country dedicated to peace, social tranquillity and economic development, not only for its people, but also for the peoples of other nations.

I want to extend a warm welcome to those who have become Members of this august body and to congratulate them on seeking membership within this brotherhood of nations. Membership itself implies an acceptance of the United Nations Charter and a recognition of the importance of the Organization's objectives. I want to assure these new Member States of my Government's readiness to extend a willing hand of friendship and cooperation as we work together to further the cause of global peace and human development.

The Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis fully subscribes to the policy of universality of membership. It is our strong belief that once a country satisfies the prerequisites for membership it should be allowed to join and to participate actively in the international fraternity of nations dedicated to upholding the principles of the Charter.

It is timely, in the context of membership, to examine the issue of the planned restructuring of the United Nations. I would like to underscore the fact that the Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis is fully supportive of the movement towards restructuring the United Nations with a view to ensuring that such restructuring will lead to the creation of more efficient and effective organs that are responsive to the development needs of States Members of the Organization. This restructuring should include both the permanent and the non-permanent membership of the Security Council.

As we seek to proceed with plans for the restructuring of the United Nations, the Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis wishes emphasis to be placed on ensuring that equitable geographic representation is seen to be encouraged, especially in respect of decision-making and in respect of positions within the Secretariat. For too long, countries like mine in the Caribbean have not been adequately represented within the United Nations Secretariat. I wish to suggest also that due consideration be given to the establishment of a United Nations office in the eastern Caribbean to serve the interests of the smaller island-States that comprise the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS).

We have looked at the questions of membership and restructuring of the United Nations. It is important for us to review the question of the mission of the Organization. The Charter calls for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples. Ten years after our independence, Saint Kitts and Nevis would like to remind the Assembly of the mission as we perceived it then:

> "We seek the establishment of a new international economic order, for a redeployment of the world's resources and for the implementation of mechanisms to increase the flow of assistance towards the world's poor." *(A/38/PV.3, p. 42)*

We ask ourselves: to what extent are these objectives being realized? To what extent is the mission being

fulfilled? The answers are gravely disappointing. The new international economic order that seems to be emerging is one in which the developed and the more powerful countries are creating mega-sized trading and economic blocs, and seeking to establish rules designed to secure their own aggrandizement at the expense of small developing countries like ours in the Caribbean, which are being quietly but surely marginalized. We see the developed and powerful countries seeking to redeploy the world's resources, as found in the biodiversity of our forests and the vastness of the ocean resources, for their own benefit, on the spurious ground that the technology is theirs and not ours. We see flows of direct assistance to developing countries drying up, and more so for the countries of the Caribbean. It would appear that the hope of seeing this mission fulfilled is less realizable now than it was 10 years ago.

Some will say that the danger of nuclear war is diminished. Some will say that many conflicts are being resolved, even though new ones are springing up. And peace is being realized in many former areas of conflict. That is all true. The question remains, however: What sort of peace are we experiencing? Peace in Haiti is fragile; peace in the Middle East is uneasy; peace in Africa is unstable. I submit that the prospects for lasting peace would be immeasurably enhanced if we sought to achieve that peace through development.

Peace and development have always been linked, but they are always portrayed as following parallel courses. My country contends that their paths must be merged and that we must achieve the one, peace, as a consequence of the other, development - development which must be sustainable and sustained.

It is important that all sectors of our communities have the opportunity to participate in the process of development and to enjoy its benefits. In Saint Kitts and Nevis, we ensure as a matter of policy that women are empowered to be effective participants in development. Our Ministry of Women's Affairs designs and implements programmes for training and mobilizing women in a variety of areas essential to the development of our country. This is an approach we recommend to all developing countries as part of the process of maximizing our human resources.

My Government welcomes the call for a Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, scheduled to convene in Barbados in April 1994. We hope that this will result in tangible benefits for the small island developing economies of the Caribbean and in a recognition of our special characteristics and needs. There is developing in international affairs - in relation to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the European Common Market and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) - a "one size fits all" mentality, or a "one prescription for all countries approach". These are obviously out of place in matters of development and human needs.

The peculiarities and differences which prompted the adoption of special economic arrangements - the Caribbean Basin Initiative, the Trade and Investment Agreement between Canada and the Caribbean Community Countries (CARIBCAN) and the Lomé Convention - are still very present today, and are likely to remain so, because our islands are not going to become any larger. In fact, we suffer from serious coastal erosion, which can be properly addressed only if substantial financial assistance is forthcoming.

I appeal to the Member nations of this august body to recognize also the fragility of our export commodities, such as sugar and bananas, as their producers represent the major employers, and they are significant sources of foreign exchange, for many Caribbean countries. Any loss, no matter how small, of the limited access which these products from the Caribbean enjoy could have catastrophic consequences for the economies and lives of the people in the Caribbean, and by extension could undermine the socio-political tranquillity of the region.

I cannot overemphasize the vulnerability of the Caribbean's ecosystem and the need for constant vigilance with respect to its protection and preservation. It is against this backdrop that my Government, along with other Governments of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), strongly condemns the transboundary movement of toxic waste and of nuclear and other hazardous materials through the Caribbean basin. We therefore call upon the industrialized countries to refrain from exporting their waste to or through the Caribbean region. We also deplore the dumping of ship-generated waste in our Caribbean waters, and call upon all ships' operators to discontinue the practice. Those waters are indeed a significant part of our economic patrimony.

The Rio Summit was a watershed for unprecedented partnership and international cooperation in the area of environmental protection. The approach that we as nations adopt on the environment should be modelled in such a way as to demonstrate our commitment to human development, environmental protection and sustainable growth.

I want to make a strong appeal to the industrialized countries and the multilateral agencies to be more rational and more sensitive to the developmental needs of the developing world, especially island communities, in their approach to dealing with the environment. Environmental concerns must be appropriately considered within the context of sustainable development. The peoples of the developing countries are entitled to an improved standard of life. The industrialized North, therefore, should not use a single policy on environment as a yardstick for assessing an individual country's eligibility for developmental assistance.

My Government firmly believes that our environment must be protected and preserved at all costs - not at the expense of our people's standard of living, but rather to enhance their quality of life. The desirability of environmental protection must be appropriately balanced against the imperatives of human development.

The problem of environmental degradation concerns a global common which we all share, and it is only through international collaboration and an adequate transfer of technical and financial assistance from developed to developing countries that we can begin to arrest and, hence, eventually solve this problem.

While we attempt to harness our collective efforts to improve the standard of living of our citizens, we are faced with the increasing danger of drug trafficking and narco-terrorism. We can ill afford to relax our resolve. While we seek peace on other fronts we must continue to wage war relentlessly on the illicit drug trade and those who work so assiduously to bolster it. There is an urgent need for greater financial assistance and technical expertise to combat this problem. It is the children, the flower of our youth, the promise of our nations' tomorrows, who are being destroyed today.

At the historic children's Summit in 1990, we set ourselves the task of creating a better world for children and of equipping them now to manage it in the future. The challenge is vast, involving their educational, health, physical, mental and psychological development, and we must make ourselves equal to the task.

There can be no greater or more noble mission than to ensure that our youth from developing nations, small or large, as from developed nations, is given every opportunity to aspire to a better quality of life. We can better achieve this in a world of peace, and we can better realize and maintain that peace through development.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Saint Kitts and Nevis for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Kennedy A. Simmonds, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Saint Kitts and Nevis, was escorted from the rostrum.

Mr. NATCHABA (Togo) *(interpretation from French)*: On behalf of the Government and people of Togo, I should like to convey very sincere condolences and feelings of compassion to the people and the Government of India, who have been so harshly afflicted by a cruel catastrophe.

Allow me first of all to discharge the pleasant duty of expressing to you, Mr. President, the warm congratulations of the Togo delegation on the unanimous confidence that has been invested in you by dint of your assumption of the lofty and noble task of conducting the debates of the current session. You can count on my delegation's full cooperation in the performance of the weighty responsibilities that fall to you.

My delegation also congratulates the outgoing President, His Excellency Mr. Stoyan Ganev, who with great mastery and skill led the work of the forty-seventh session to success.

To our Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, I also wish to pay a well-deserved tribute for the remarkable work he has been carrying out since his election to the head of our Organization. I should also like to reiterate to him our very sincere gratitude for his constant and tireless efforts to enhance the effectiveness of the Organization, particularly in the field of peace-keeping and the maintenance of international peace and security. The firm determination he has displayed in the restructuring of the United Nations to better adapt it to present-day realities has also won our admiration.

Our Organization is growing steadily, bringing us ever closer to the goal of universality envisaged in the Charter of San Francisco. Togo bids welcome to the new Members that have joined the Organization this year, and we express to them our willingness to work in concert with them in building a world of greater justice and solidarity.

The prevailing situation in the world today does not live up to the expectations engendered by the changes that

took place at the beginning of this decade. The hope of universal renewal characterized by the building of a world of peace, prosperity and justice, marked by reliable solidarity and more active cooperation among nations, has been slow in taking concrete form.

The grim picture seen in the tragedies unfolding before our eyes in Somalia, Liberia, Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina and elsewhere, as well as the persistence of the international economic crisis, leads one to believe that the future of the world is not as rosy as we had hoped. The new order is still rather nebulous.

Nevertheless, we welcome the growing involvement of the Organization in settling the various crises facing the world. This bears witness to its new vitality and reflects the growing confidence that Member States place in multilateral cooperation.

Mr. Kasenda (Zaire), Vice-President, took the Chair.

A year ago we noted from this same rostrum the upheavals that had occurred in recent years throughout the world, particularly in Europe, Asia and Africa. Those signs of the times were then said to exemplify the determination of peoples to gain more freedom and full participation in the management of political affairs.

Today, more than ever before, those peoples are still searching for that era of freedom, peace and justice that only democracy, stripped of all disguise and based on clearly understood and assimilated multi-party systems, can provide them, with the support of the international community, though without the need to yield to the temptation of imposing a uniform model.

This emancipation movement, to which the African peoples did not hesitate to adhere, has met with different fortunes in its various manifestations. While in certain countries the transition towards democracy has unfolded somewhat smoothly and has made it possible to bring about genuine changes, in others the process has hardly achieved the objectives so earnestly desired. This is true in some countries of the African continent that, because of a lack of understanding between the various players, face enormous difficulties that rend the fabric of society. Because of this lack of understanding, the aspiration of the African peoples to more freedom and democracy, though a legitimate one, has unfortunately given rise here and there to a new type of problem, on top of the continent's usual troubles.

It is unfortunate that my country, Togo, has surely paid a heavier price than others in the ineluctable march towards democratization. Indeed, no one can know the pain and sorrow of our people's path in its progress towards democracy. Many difficulties arising from serious misunderstandings between the players in national political life regarding what democratization involves have dealt a heavy blow to the democratic process, which we had all hoped with all our hearts would be a peaceful one. This has led to a rare outbreak of political violence, which has ravaged the whole of the national territory, unleashed serious disruptions in the nation and displaced populations.

In the face of this worrisome situation that was threatening national cohesion, the Government, anxious to do everything it could to bring the transition to culmination as quickly as possible, has made numerous efforts to find a solution to the political crisis in which our country was plunged. In this spirit, it has done everything it can to combat violence and insecurity by deploying the public security forces in order to ensure, throughout the territory, the peace and order that are indispensable for the free movement of peoples and goods and the proper conduct of social, economic and political activity before, during and after the electoral consultations.

However, I hardly think it necessary to go on at great length on this situation, because we were offered the means of a solution, and we did not fail to seize it. Thus, the people of Togo have regained the hope and calm they so needed in order to regain their confidence.

The elections of last 25 August - which were held, by and large, in a calm and serene atmosphere and transparency and in the presence of international observers - allowed our people democratically to appoint the first President of the Fourth Togolese Republic. Re-elected with a large majority of the votes cast, the outgoing President, General Gnassingbé Eyadema, set as his main task to work tirelessly, in full respect of human rights, for national reconciliation and the recovery of the country's economy, ruined by more than two years of turbulent transition. He therefore called upon the sons of the nation to start with a clean slate, to forgive themselves and unite in the struggle for the democratic process and the restoration of the country, in the interests of all. Certainly, some problems remain, but such problems are inherent to any apprenticeship. It is thus possible now to hope that Togo will be restored to its former health.

In this connection, I am pleased to point out that, with regard to the forthcoming legislative elections, the Government has already taken steps to resolve all the technical problems connected with the organization of the elections so as to ensure that they are held in the greatest possible transparency. Aware that democracy requires the cooperation of all in the management of the polity's affairs, the Government intends to spare no effort to ensure the opposition's participation in the forthcoming legislative elections.

Our delegation should emphasize here the very useful role played by friendly countries in the search for a successful solution to the crisis in our country. I therefore take the opportunity to thank from this rostrum all those who, from near or far, contributed to our achievement of that result. Our feelings of deep gratitude go out particularly to the people, the Government and the Head of State of Burkina Faso, Mr. Blaise Compaoré, who applied all their talents to bring about that which, several months earlier, still seemed impossible: bring our Togolese brothers around a negotiating table and lead them to reach agreement.

I also wish to welcome the sustained action undertaken by France, the Federal Republic of Germany and the United States of America, whose mediation contributed to the favourable outcome of the initiatives. My Government is particularly grateful to the United Nations and to the Organization of African Unity, whose observers in the field made a very valuable contribution to the proper holding of the elections of 25 August 1993. It is to be hoped that the result of this process will be the restoration of national cohesion, allowing the Togolese henceforth to enjoy their rights fully and in all tranquillity, including their right to fundamental freedoms and to development.

The World Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna from 14 to 25 June 1993, seems to have been an effort to produce international consensus on the further promotion, protection and defence of human rights. That meeting enshrined the axiom, henceforth shared by all, that development, democracy and human rights form an indissociable triad.

But can we speak objectively of the effective enjoyment of human rights in the case of a population whose standards of living are below the necessary minimum? The rights to food, education and adequate health care are in fact denied to the citizens of our developing countries, above all because of an unfavourable international economic situation. The first among human rights is the right to life - a decent life. Therefore, in the framework of promoting and protecting human rights, it is necessary to redouble efforts to help the developing countries to assume their responsibility to contribute to the full flowering of the individual.

My country, which is deeply devoted to respect for the human person and determined to build a State of law, has assumed as its own - by including them in its new Constitution, adopted by referendum on 27 September 1992 - the fundamental principles of democracy and those linked to the protection and promotion of human rights. Once again, I should like to affirm before this Assembly that Togo is firmly committed to all universal values encompassing the protection and enjoyment of rights inherent to the human person. It is thus with faith and conviction that I aver that the difficulties of adapting national legislation to international norms and the various approaches available in no way detract from the duty of each State to contribute to the tangible and irreversible progress of the cause of human rights throughout the world.

The end of the cold war and the disappearance of ideological antagonisms have not yet made it possible to usher in the genuine era of peace to which the world aspired, despite the encouraging prospects these changes seemed to offer. Indeed, narrow nationalism, religious fanaticism, ethnic rivalry and hegemonism have resurfaced, unfortunately plunging certain parts of the world into turmoil.

Thus, in Africa, the situation remains disquieting despite the praiseworthy efforts of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity to settle the conflicts ravaging the continent. In Angola, it is unfortunate that war persists and continues to claim many victims, despite the initiatives made to induce the belligerent brothers to lay down their arms. I express the hope that both protagonists, overriding all other considerations, make as their main goals the re-establishment of peace and the higher interests of the Angolan people, and renounce the use of force and find a final and negotiated solution to the conflict.

In South Africa, the positive progress achieved - particularly the fixing of 27 April 1994 as the date for the holding of the first multiracial elections - clearly demonstrate that the emergence of a democratic non-racial society in that country is near at hand. In that spirit, Togo welcomes the adoption in Cape Town on 23 September by the three houses of the South African Parliament of a bill instituting a transitional executive council entrusted with

helping and controlling governmental activities up to the elections.

However, the noteworthy progress made recently towards the complete and final dismantling of the apartheid system has been unable to disguise the various acts of violence, aggression, confrontation and assassination that have become daily features of South African political and social life. This increased violence, inspired and cunningly maintained by groupings opposed to change, should prompt the international community to do all in its power to ensure the irreversibility of the process under way.

The Togolese Government takes note with interest of the appeal made on 24 September by the President of the African National Congress, Mr. Nelson Mandela, for the lifting of economic sanctions against South Africa. It is our hope that this measure will help to accelerate the democratic process in that country.

In Somalia, the deployment of the United Nations Operation has made it possible to alleviate the suffering of the population. My delegation, while welcoming the efforts of the United Nations to restore normal living conditions, expresses its grave concern at the enormous loss of life among the civilian populations and the Blue Helmets alike.

Given the present delicate situation there, it is important, as the Security Council unanimously urged on 22 September, to redouble efforts to reach a political settlement. To that end, we cannot overemphasize the need to do everything possible to fulfil the objectives of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II), namely, the

> "facilitation of humanitarian assistance and the restoration of law and order, and of national reconciliation in a free, democratic and sovereign Somalia ...". *(Security Council resolution 865 (1993), para. 4.)*

As for Liberia and Rwanda, which have for a number of years been arenas of cruel, fratricidal upheavals, Togo is pleased to see that, thanks to the courage, farsightedness and determination of the parties concerned, there are finally some indications of genuine prospects for a final settlement of those conflicts through, respectively, the Cotonou and Arusha Agreements.

In the case of Liberia, in particular, my delegation welcomes the arrangements made by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the United Nations for the implementation of the Agreement of 25 July so that the people of Liberia can once again live in peace and security and set about rebuilding their country in regained national unity.

In that connection, we believe that the role to be played by the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL), established by the Security Council on 22 September of this year, will be a very decisive one.

With regard to the situation in Western Sahara, Togo welcomes the efforts of the Secretary-General as set forth in his report of 28 July 1993 (S/26185) on that question and urges him to pursue dialogue with the parties to the conflict in order to achieve implementation of the United Nations settlement plan.

There are other regions of the world in which conflicts also demand our attention and call for further efforts on our part to come up with adequate solutions.

In the case of the Middle East and the Israeli-Arab conflict, Togo welcomes the signing of the agreement on mutual recognition between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and hails it as an important first step towards peace in the region. Today, that agreement and the one relating to Palestinian autonomy in the Gaza Strip and Jericho are indications that things are finally on the right track. My country is more than ever convinced that only the final settlement of the Palestinian problem can lead to peace in the region.

True, there is still a long way to travel down the road to peace. In reaching that goal, the protagonists, both Arab and Israeli, need our material and moral support. The consolidation of the process that has been set in motion depends on the international community's ability to respond effectively and urgently to the economic and social development needs of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, for only viable development can ensure lasting peace in the region.

As for the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, I should like, on behalf of the Togolese Government, to repeat here our hope for the success of all the initiatives taken by all sides to end the tragedy in that country. No one in the world can sleep peacefully in the knowledge of the anguish of the innocent victims of that conflict. To the protagonists we say: Enough! Enough of dying! Be flexible, be reasonable.

Finally, with regard to Cambodia, Togo welcomes the inestimable peace-keeping efforts made by the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), which made it possible for free and democratic elections in that country, under United Nations auspices, to be held in May 1993.

The various conflicts that beset the world are directly related to the arms race. All countries are in duty bound to increase their efforts to halt that race. At stake are the survival of mankind and national, regional and international peace and security.

General and complete disarmament - genuine disarmament - for which all mankind so ardently hopes, requires a substantial contribution from all Member States and the creation of appropriate structures. In this connection, the action of the United Nations in this area should be stepped up in order that the objectives of disarmament can be achieved. The mission of the Regional Disarmament Centres should be viewed in the same context. It is essential that they be made more operational by providing them with adequate human, material and financial resources to enable them fully to discharge their duties.

The effectiveness of our Organization obviously depends on restructuring and revitalizing it. My delegation, while welcoming the efforts already exerted in this connection, believes that a review of the Charter is an imperative need in order to enable all the organs of the United Nations to participate fully in the implementation of its purposes and principles.

The time has come for the Organization to hew more closely to the spirit of the Charter. My delegation therefore warmly welcomes the proposals that there should be a rethinking of the membership of the Security Council with a view to its expansion. In that endeavour it is important that serious consideration be given to equitable geographical representation of various regions so as to endow the universal Organization with a broader international consensus that would provide a solid basis for its actions and make it more dynamic, more active and more efficient.

As far as relations between States are concerned, the Government of Togo, in keeping with its policy of openness, dialogue and concerted action, firmly adheres to the principles of non-interference in the internal affairs of States and the non-use of force. Furthermore, we believe that, given the present state of international relations, the Organization should help its Members to create domestic conditions that can contribute to the elimination of tensions capable of leading to war either within or between States.

It was in that spirit that we welcomed last year the highly pertinent recommendations formulated by the Secretary-General in his report, "An Agenda for Peace", which were aimed at the maintenance and restoration of international peace and security. Today more than ever before, the United Nations must strengthen its capacity to maintain and preserve that peace and security, to ensure respect for human rights and to promote economic and social progress.

The economic and social gap between rich and poor countries is growing wider by the day, and the economies of the developing countries, particularly the least developed among them, are prey to chronic recession.

In Africa the situation is even more tragic. The peoples of Africa, already the victims of undernourishment, famine and all kinds of other ills, are also bearing the full brunt of the constant decrease in export prices, the continuous deterioration of terms of trade, the obstacles imposed on trade, and the burden of indebtedness.

In the area of international trade, relationships are ruled by the law of the jungle. The persistence of protectionism and the adoption of Draconian measures against exports from developing countries continue to hamper the efforts they are making to achieve growth through exports.

In the light of what I have just said, it is urgent for the international economic environment to be improved by designing a more open and transparent trading system. The system will have to protect and support the trading relationships of the third world countries with the industrialized countries and, moreover, make it possible for countries with weak economies to come away from the sidelines and be fully integrated into the world economy.

My Government therefore wishes trade liberalization to lead to the establishment of principles of fair play that would impel the countries of the North to buy the South's products at remunerative prices. Towards this end, it is our hope that the multilateral negotiations of the Uruguay Round will take into account the concerns of the third world.

The debt problem remains a source of serious concern for the African States, which are already being sorely tried by the effects of the world economic crisis. Africa, which

is allocating more than half its income to servicing its debt, as required by the structural adjustment programmes, has been struggling for more than a decade now under an economic shock therapy that leaves it no chance of success. Unfortunately, the many initiatives that have been taken to promote our countries' development have so far not had positive results, as most of them have been implemented only half-heartedly. This is particularly true of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s and the Paris Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s.

In view of these considerations, my delegation would like to recall that it is for the international community to adopt steps designed to alleviate the debt burden. These steps should include, *inter alia*, writing off debt for developing countries or, failing that, reducing it substantially, making repayment conditions more flexible, and setting up and paying into a diversification fund to transform the commodities sector and stimulate economic growth in Africa. There should also be a call for a considerable increase in official development assistance.

As the 1980s were a lost decade for Africa, during the 1990s the industrialized countries should agree to an increase in financial flows to the poorer countries sufficient to support their activities and programmes for development, economic expansion and diversification, because it is a shame to see aid levels falling just when the African countries are making major efforts to promote democracy and manage their economies in a sound and rigorous manner. Of course, no one opts for democracy in the expectation of preferential treatment, but particular attention should be paid to our countries, which are already shaky as a result of the general crisis that is rocking the world. Although we should stick to the rules of good economic management, it would be a good thing if our countries, which are already in trouble, were not forced to submit to long-drawn-out economic therapies that are quite likely to kill their efforts to become more democratic.

So, are we right to hope that the Tokyo Conference on African development, which is going on right now, will make it possible for us to drive it home to the major world political and economic players that there is a crying need to make a massive, collective effort for African recovery, because Africa's economy has fallen into wrack and ruin? Forty-eight years after the Second World War, the world, which is still characterized by an attitude, on the part of the strong, of moral indifference and hardness of heart towards the weak, is still living in fear of what the next day will bring.

However, despite the tough political, economic and social realities that all mankind is facing, we all do feel the commonality of our peoples' destiny and, without a doubt, the relevance of the purpose and principles of our Organization. Thus, we must turn the upheavals since the end of the cold war to advantage by building a new world order based on collective security on three levels - the political, the economic and the humanitarian - so as to bring about better living conditions in greater liberty.

Towards this end, the United Nations would gain by being reformed, made more democratic and revitalized in order to live up to its universal vocation and take up the many challenges that a changing world is imposing on it.

Mr. JAMEEL (Maldives): It gives me great pleasure to congratulate Ambassador Insanally on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. His election to this important post is, beyond a doubt, a testimony to his personal credentials and the important role being played by his country in international affairs.

I should also like to commend the work of his predecessor, Mr. Stoyan Ganev of Bulgaria, who demonstrated outstanding skills of diplomacy, and dedication.

It is also my pleasant duty to pay tribute to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his untiring efforts in promoting international peace and security.

I should also like to extend a warm welcome to the six new States, Andorra, the Czech Republic, Eritrea, Monaco, the Slovak Republic and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia that have joined us during the past year. I am confident that their participation and contribution will further enrich the work of the Organization.

Along with the end of the cold war came promises: promises of a better future, without the threat of nuclear holocaust, where scarce resources would not be spent on building up military might, where millions of starving would be fed and provided with their basic health care needs, safe drinking water and a basic level of education, where a safe and clean environment would be provided along with the right to sustainable development, and where the dignity of the human being would be respected. This is the vision that gave rise to this Organization in 1945.

We have rededicated ourselves to this vision with renewed vigour following the demise of the cold war. The moral authority of the United Nations has been reasserted over military might. A number of protracted conflicts have shown signs of movement towards resolution. International cooperation in addressing global issues such as environment, disarmament, international peace and security and human rights have reached new heights. As a consequence, the United Nations has gained new respect and been entrusted with new responsibilities. In order to live up to the heightened expectations, the Organization must continue to receive the unwavering commitment of its Member States.

The Republic of Maldives would like to take this opportunity to renew its commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

These changes in the work of the United Nations reflect corresponding changes in the political, economic, and security landscape that underpins efforts in international cooperation today. In view of this reality, the Security Council of the United Nations needs to be reformed and restructured. We should be careful not to take a piecemeal approach to this: any expansion of the Council, and the status of the members, should be based on the principles of equitable and balanced representation. We should formulate principled criteria that reflect the political, economic and demographic realities of the world today.

The events in Bosnia and Herzegovina have shamed us all. A State Member of the United Nations has been subjected to naked aggression. The entire population of a small country is being progressively exterminated. It is deliberate genocide.

We need to examine why the international community has failed to stop the carnage that is taking place in that country. Regional, international and direct diplomacy have been applied, but to no avail. At a time when the world community has rededicated itself to the sanctity of human rights, it is a tragic shame that systematic violation of these rights has gone unpunished owing to lack of will on the part of the international community.

We condemn the continued violence and genocide in Bosnia and Herzegovina and call upon the international community to take more decisive steps so that the responsibilities entrusted to us under the Charter of this Organization may be discharged fully. We fully recognize the inherent right to self-defence, as prescribed in the Charter. We believe that the right to self-defence comprises the most fundamental right - the right to life.

A permanent solution to the situation in Bosnia should be found by peaceful means and within the parameters of the Charter of the United Nations, one of which is the principle of territorial integrity.

The continued violations of basic human rights that are taking place in Angola and Somalia are a matter of serious concern to us. The events in Somalia - especially the attacks on the United Nations peace-keeping personnel - are grave developments that threaten the working of this Organization. United Nations involvement in Somalia now raises several questions, including those concerning the sincerity of the warring parties with regard to their acceptance of help from the international community to overcome the extreme poverty that has ravaged the entire country.

Today, the United Nations is learning a lesson that is very expensive, in terms of both human life and financial resources, as it provides humanitarian assistance and seeks to protect the people of these countries. It is indeed ironic and tragic that peace- keepers have themselves become targets of violence. My Government condemns such violence in the strongest possible terms and believes that those responsible for such acts should be brought to justice.

These experiences demonstrate that if the parties involved are not sincere in the efforts to find a peaceful solution and to avoid violence, the United Nations, acting on its own, will be unable to perform miracles.

Developments taking place in South Africa have been encouraging. The very active and high-level role currently being played by the United Nations in facilitating the cessation of political violence and the promotion of negotiations to establish a democratic and non-racial State in South Africa is commendable. My Government also commends the African National Congress (ANC) and the Government of South Africa for their positive attitude towards working out the details of the multi-party elections. In this connection, the recent agreement to set up a multi-party Transitional Executive Council is a welcome development. We feel that the end of the era of apartheid, which is an affront to human dignity, is imminent. In this context, we urge all parties concerned to refrain from violence and actions that would subvert the peace process.

It is our hope that when we meet here in New York next year we shall have amongst us the true representatives of the South African people and that this Organization will be able to benefit from their experience and knowledge.

The Arab-Israeli peace talks that began in 1991 have made remarkable progress. The signing of the declarations of principles by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel in Washington last month was an historic event. In this context, I should like to express to the PLO and the people of Palestine our admiration for their courage and their determination to find a comprehensive and peaceful solution to the question of Palestine.

The Maldives pays tribute also to the Government of the United States of America and other Governments involved for the important role they are playing in the Middle East peace talks. It is our earnest hope that this agreement will lead to the restoration of the inalienable right of the Palestine people to self-determination, sovereign independence and the establishment of a national homeland on their own soil.

The tragic consequences of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait are still a matter of serious concern to the international community. All outstanding issues, such as the border dispute and the release of Kuwaiti and third-country prisoners still being held in Iraqi jails, should be settled immediately. The resolution of these issues, in conformity with international law and practice, will contribute to the elimination of tension and to the restoration of security and stability in the region.

In this regard, the Government of Maldives welcomes the completion of the work of the Iraq-Kuwait Boundary Demarcation Commission and the endorsement of the report of this Commission by the Security Council. We also feel that Kuwait's acceptance of the Commission's report is a very positive step indicative of that country's eagerness and sincerity in its attitude towards a comprehensive solution. The Government of Maldives urges Iraq to adopt an equally positive attitude in the interests of peace, security and stability.

In June this year the international community came together at the second World Conference on Human Rights to review and assess progress and setbacks in the area of human rights since the adoption of the Universal Declaration in 1948. I am happy that we were able to make considerable progress in several key areas. We believe that some of the achievements of this Conference will give new impetus to the promotion of human rights throughout the world. However, we all need to be very realistic in addressing this very important issue. The international community should not let the promotion of human rights be used by a few as an excuse for imposing uniformity in human behaviour and thinking, at the expense of diversity. Rather, it should emphasize the significance of the universality of human rights. We know only too well the fate of societies that try to impose uniform thinking and behaviour on their peoples. Differences between individuals and societies should be valued. Such diversity enriches our family of nations.

The Government of Maldives has always attached great importance to disarmament and international peace and security. It is our firm belief that the production and stockpiling of armaments will only worsen the security of the entire world. In this regard, Maldives calls upon the international community not to lose the current momentum towards disarmament. We therefore urge the parties involved to continue to build upon past achievements, particularly in the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, the control of proliferation, the achievement of greater transparency in armaments and the negotiation of other confidence-building measures.

Early this year, Maldives acceded to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, and, today, on behalf of the Government of Maldives, I have signed the Convention. Maldives is not involved in the production and stockpiling of such weapons. My Government's accession and signature therefore demonstrate our commitment to supporting all international efforts to eradicate such weaponry.

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty was one of the first international Treaties to which my country became a party after gaining its independence in 1965. Our commitment to this Treaty is unwavering because we fully realize the consequences of the proliferation of such weapons of mass destruction. My Government supports the indefinite extension of the Treaty beyond 1995. We believe that, within its framework, progress could be made in the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones and zones of peace, for which my Government reiterates its full support. We feel that the establishment of such zones will further contribute to the promotion of international peace and security.

I also wish to express my Government's unqualified support for the total eradication of all weapons of mass destruction, be it chemical, biological or nuclear, and to reiterate our call for the conclusion of effective agreements on a comprehensive ban on nuclear testing. In this connection, the Government of Maldives commends the

United States for its unilateral decision to extend its moratorium on nuclear testing until the end of 1994.

The Charter of the United Nations recognizes the inherent rights of all States to self-defence. However, only a privileged few possess the ability to provide for their own security unilaterally. Small States which lack adequate financial resources for the acquisition of military equipment and face severe constraints in manpower are never in a position to provide suitably for their own security. Any attempt by small States to build their military capabilities up to a level of even near self-reliance would be a mere waste of resources. The United Nations remains the only guarantor of security for the small States.

In the economic sphere, the world economy once again failed to meet the expected rate of growth. It continues to be characterized by deteriorating terms of trade for the developing countries and rising protectionism in developed countries. For decades the developing countries have sought a new world economic order that would eliminate the imbalances existing in the present system. However, little has been accomplished towards the attainment of this goal. The scientific and technological gap between the developing and the developed countries is becoming ever wider. The flow of official development assistance has declined as a result of the slow growth in the economies of the donor countries.

The global arrangements and institutions established to manage economic relations between States have not been able to lift the world from its present depression. This failure has serious implications for the developing countries. In order to avoid disastrous consequences, we call for an early conclusion of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) that will set the tone for a future based on an open-trading system.

The North-South dialogue must be reactivated on a new basis comprising common interests and benefits and shared responsibilities. Similarly, South-South cooperation must be intensified, allowing States to pool their resources and pursue concrete development efforts within the framework of collective self-reliance and continued support for open trading systems. The world cannot rise out of its economic disarray and be assured of stability until the North and the South can together work out a system that encourages closer economic relations and strengthens the North-South exchange.

One particular concept that needs emphasis is the inseparability of development from the equitable sharing of its fruits and its responsibilities. This twofold aspect of development must be pursued at one and the same time and with equal intensity if development is to succeed. In this regard, let me reiterate my Government's firm belief that sustainable development is the only way to guarantee continued life on this planet Earth. We need to accelerate our efforts to meet the commitments we made in Rio last year. We call on all States urgently to ratify the climate Convention and the bio-diversity Convention. My Government is proud to announce that it was one of the first to ratify both these Conventions.

The establishment of the Commission on Sustainable Development is a welcome development. We commend the Commission for the very productive work accomplished at its first substantive session and hope that its future work will be of the same high standard.

The preparatory work for the Global Conference for Small Island States on Sustainable Development and its Implications began during this year. My country, as a small island State, regards this Conference as a very important step in addressing and finding practical solutions to the unique problems facing us in our developmental efforts. We hope that the international community will continue to participate constructively in the preparatory process and will participate in the Conference itself.

The responsibility that has been thrust upon us today is tremendous. The realization of the dreams of our peoples are in our hands. We cannot afford to be blind to the desires of our peoples to be better fed, to have safer drinking water, to have access to education and health-care needs and to be free from the prospect of nuclear holocaust and the dangers of environmental degradation. We cannot afford to be embroiled in the build-up of stockpiles of armaments and weapons of mass destruction while our economies are the main victims of these acquisitions for death and destruction.

We should rise above all this and become more human in all our endeavours. I have no doubt that together we can actually achieve the better future that has been promised to us.

Mr. MESFIN (Ethiopia): It gives me great pleasure to congratulate Ambassador Insanally of Guyana on his election to the high office of the presidency of the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

I am also delighted to welcome the new Members of the Organization. In this regard allow me to welcome especially the State of Eritrea as a Member of the United Nations. At the end of a cruel war the people of Eritrea exercised their right to self-determination and opted for sovereign statehood in a referendum which won praise from the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity and other international organizations as being free and fair. Addis Ababa and Asmara took steps immediately to forge a new era of close relationship and cooperation.

The healing of the wounds of war has progressed dramatically. Building for shared prosperity is progressing in earnest. Ethiopia believes that the spirit in which the Eritrean problem was resolved, as well as the developments taking place to forge a basis for permanent peace and all-round cooperation, is a unique manifestation of the era of change from conflict to concord. Peace has provided us with the opportunity to concentrate on reconstruction and lay the groundwork for sustainable development in Ethiopia and in Eritrea.

The vision of the Ethiopian and Eritrean leaderships and peoples is for economic, social and cultural integration leading to political integration on a new plane. The leaderships of the two countries have a vision for expanding such integration to include the countries of the subregion. The establishment of peace and stability is therefore a priority agenda in the coordinated efforts of our two Governments and we are determined to pursue our objectives, however difficult the hurdles may be. Nevertheless, we recognize that the Ethiopian and Eritrean situation does not cover all the hopes and expectations for the changes that have taken place in the last few years.

As there are encouraging developments in some parts of the world, we are also witnessing painful situations in others. The crisis in Somalia is a case in point. Since this crisis is at the heart of my Government's concerns, I would like to beg the indulgence of this Assembly to take a few moments to make a brief comment on the disturbing developments there.

It is to be recalled that the Security Council's decision to restore order and to open the channels for the delivery of humanitarian aid was put into effect in December 1992 and thereafter. Immediate action was then taken to bring together the warring factions as well as representatives of various sectors of Somali society. The aim was to secure their agreement on a plan of action for the restoration of peace and the establishment of the structures of civil administration. In particular, the reconciliation input of the high-level Horn of Africa Standing Committee on Somalia was brought to bear at the Conference held in Addis Ababa in March of this year. An agreement was hammered out on a series of measures leading to peace and political stability in the country. The main elements of the agreement included a cease-fire; a programme of disarmament; regional reconciliation; measures on finding a political solution to be achieved through the establishment of elected district and regional councils, to culminate in the establishment of a transitional national council as the highest organ of state; and the principles for the settlement of conflicts relating to property claims.

Concurrently, the Addis Ababa agreement of March 1993 provides for modalities of continuing humanitarian relief and the initiation of rehabilitation as well as reconstruction programmes. The United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) was to manage peace-keeping and the maintenance of an appropriate environment for the execution of rehabilitation and reconstruction programmes. It was then hoped that implementation of the political aspects of the Addis Ababa agreement would proceed as planned.

However, the Somali situation took a tragic turn, particularly when, on 5 June this year, United Nations peace-keepers from Pakistan and many Somalis were killed. That was a deplorable incident indeed, and we continue to be seriously disturbed by the tragic events which have resulted since then in further loss of life with no apparent end to the crisis. Indeed, there is a deadlock and a dilemma as to how to overcome the impasse in Mogadishu.

In the view of my delegation, a thorough review of all aspects of the Somali situation by the United Nations is imperative. Such a review should be aimed at restoring the situation that existed before 5 June and at proceeding from there with the implementation of the Addis Ababa agreement. In this respect, it is clear that involving the factions as well as representatives of the various sectors of Somali society in the processes is vital.

UNOSOM is the last chance Somalia has. Therefore, it must not be allowed to fail. Its preoccupation with the 5 June incident should not be allowed to divert its attention from its ultimate goal of political reconciliation and economic and social rehabilitation. It must be recognized that, for the objectives of UNOSOM to be achieved, the battle for the hearts and minds of all Somalis must be won. My delegation believes that all UNOSOM troops should be materially and spiritually equipped to fight and win such a war, and that whenever there are shortcomings in that

regard UNOSOM should be prepared to act promptly to redress them. Ethiopia is ready to contribute its share to such a scenario. It will be recalled, in this regard, that the Organization of African Unity at its summit meeting in Cairo in June of this year gave a mandate to President Meles Zenawi of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia to follow up and assist in the resolution of the Somali crisis. This mandate was endorsed by the fourth summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD).

I would like to quote from the Declaration adopted by the fourth summit of IGADD, held in Addis Ababa on 6 and 7 September 1993.

> "We applaud the positive achievements of the United Nations in Somalia in preventing the death of thousands of Somalis through starvation and conflict;
>
> "We reinforce the conviction that caution is required in handling the current very complicated political situation in Somalia;
>
> "We further call for a meaningful consultation between UNOSOM and the countries of the subregion and reiterate the need for a more active role on the part of the countries of the subregion;
>
> "We fully endorse the mandate given to President Meles Zenawi to follow developments in Somalia on behalf of the OAU by also mandating him to follow up the developments in that member State on behalf of the countries of the subregion."

While the implementation of the Addis Ababa agreement is, in our considered view, the only viable avenue towards a political solution to the Somali crisis, we also regard UNOSOM as a guarantor against a slide into anarchy in Somalia. We urge UNOSOM to continue with its task until the objectives of the Addis Ababa agreement are fully achieved.

The problem of refugees and persons displaced by a host of calamities continues to haunt the Horn of Africa subregion. In this regard, Ethiopia continues to face immense difficulties, the solutions of which are beyond what its meagre resources and capacities allow. On top of this, Ethiopia has to cope with the requirements of settling close to 1 million returnees.

It is to be recalled that agreement on principles for the delivery of humanitarian assistance was reached with the donors at the Horn of Africa Conference held in Addis Ababa in April 1992. Those principles should be observed to ensure that relief assistance reaches the needy.

Human life is precious. Denying people the right to survival, therefore, is a crime. Those who hamper the delivery of relief aid to the needy are criminals. Likewise, those who hold human survival hostage to their political agendas cannot and must not be regarded as anything but criminals.

The President returned to the Chair.

It may be possible to put pressure on the recipients with a view to adjusting their positions in ways that would facilitate the delivery of relief aid. But the thought of applying pressure on the donors is, to say the least, nightmarish. I would like to stress that humanitarian work should be absolutely depoliticized.

With respect to other issues of concern to the international community, I would like to refer to the promising developments in South Africa. My delegation welcomes the decision on the establishment of a Transitional Executive Council responsible for supervising the process of transition towards a non-racial, democratic South Africa. We commend and support all the political leaders for their bold actions in paving the way for a peaceful transition to democracy in South Africa.

Regrettably, however, there are areas of grave concern where peace has yet to materialize. In this regard, the resumption of hostilities in Angola is a blow to the stupendous efforts made by the international community and by Angolans themselves to restore peace in that country. We appeal to the parties concerned to resolve their differences at the negotiating table, taking into account the elections, which have been declared free and fair by international observers, as a reference for a political settlement of the Angolan conflict.

On other areas of conflict in Africa, Ethiopia appeals to its brothers in Rwanda, Mozambique and Liberia to continue the momentum towards the establishment of peace in their respective countries. Likewise, it is Ethiopia's fervent hope that our brothers in the Sudan will soon discover the happy medium that brings peace and tranquility.

On the Middle East, Ethiopia welcomes the first step towards a settlement embodied in the historic agreement signed in Washington by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). We warmly congratulate the leaders of both sides on their courageous move, and hope that the momentum towards a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East conflict will pick up speed as a result.

However, it appears that our hopes in some areas of the world are destined to be tempered by virtual despair in others. I am referring here to the tragic situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the senseless killing that seems to have no end. I call it senseless not with the intent of passing judgement on the legitimacy of the respective positions of the parties to the conflict, but rather to underline the universal belief that the dividends of peace are so much greater than the gains of an enormously destructive war. In full recognition of the fact that an end to the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina is in the hands of the combatants themselves, we appeal to them to cooperate with international mediation efforts.

Humanity wants peace. Thus, humanity is looking to the United Nations and hopes that this Organization's resources and fortitude will make the desired impact through preventive diplomacy, conflict management and conflict resolution. At the regional level, the Organization of African Unity, at its twenty-ninth summit, held in Cairo last June, decided to establish a mechanism for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts. Ethiopia is committed to work vigorously for its effective implementation and for its success.

Although we are far from being satisfied, the newly emerging international situation indicates some encouraging prospects in the area of political relationships. In the field of international economic relations, however, the situation is far from encouraging. Our world still faces the uncomfortable reality of its division into two blocs: the affluent and the poor, the North and the South. Poverty still represents the greatest threat to democratic governance and world peace and security. Political instability, corruption, hunger, illicit drug trafficking and a litany of other evils trace their roots to mass poverty. And the international community is not unaware of the factors that have conspired to frustrate the hopes and aspirations of poor countries.

Promises of special programmes for the least developed countries, 10-year action programmes and so forth agreed upon by the international community have so far made little difference by way of alleviating poverty. In Africa, overall economic growth continues to lag behind population growth. And the continent remains the poorest of all. Since there can be no stability or better prospects for the world without reducing the disparities in levels of global development, both developed and developing countries should conduct a constructive dialogue on practical measures for stimulating development.

Environment and development are the two major concerns to which the international community has turned its attention. In particular, Ethiopia appreciates the international community's support for the effort to combat desertification and drought, which are causing extensive environmental degradation in Africa. We appeal to all Member States to support fully the efforts of the intergovernmental negotiating committee for the elaboration of an international convention to combat desertification. Environmental degradation is a major development bottleneck which must be addressed as a matter of urgency.

This occasion provides me an opportunity to share with this Assembly a few thoughts on the situation prevailing in Ethiopia since the establishment of the transitional Government two years ago. The process of democratization and self-rule has been consolidated through local and regional elections. The policy on equitable power-sharing among the various regions and nationalities has succeeded in ensuring peace and stability throughout the country. These, coupled with the implementation of liberalized economic reforms, reconstruction programmes and improved weather conditions, have brought about encouraging improvements in the economy. The supportive role of international financial institutions and the donor community have had a useful impact on the positive outcome of Ethiopia's reconstruction and recovery efforts. Therefore, in a brief period of two years, Ethiopia has emerged from a state of despair to one of recovery. We are now looking to the future with considerable confidence.

With respect to political programmes, Ethiopia has launched the final phase of the transition period with work on drafting a constitution. When the constitution is approved, multi-party elections are planned, on the basis of which permanent State structures will be put in place.

Already, an independent judiciary is functioning, and legality is assuming a prominent role in guaranteeing the human rights of the people. Peaceful political activity, a free press and freedom of expression and of conscience are established features of Ethiopian life today. Our democratic attitude is working. It is working in consolidating peace and stability and in generating investor and business confidence.

It has worked in restoring the confidence of the people in their own future.

Ethiopia is committed to the observance of all aspects of the protection of human rights. Protection of the dignity of man also means freedom from poverty. "Prisoner of conscience" and "prisoner of poverty" are one and the same. The right to freedom of expression and the right to education are indivisible. Concern for human rights is virtually meaningless without corresponding action on the alleviation of poverty, ignorance and other causes of deprivation. Ethiopia therefore appeals to the international community to cooperate in addressing the issue of human rights in the context of these general principles.

Our democratic outlook with respect to our relations with neighbouring countries and peoples has borne fruit. Ethiopia has never enjoyed such harmony, both internally and in its relations with its neighbours.

Ethiopia has attained the requisite self-confidence that makes it a true partner in the community of nations. I wish therefore to reiterate the continued faith of my country in the collective wisdom of our global Organization and to pledge anew our unreserved support for the laudable efforts of the United Nations system. We believe that as the guarantor of international peace and stability, the United Nations should expand its efforts by stepping up its activities in the field of preventive diplomacy. It should develop new, more effective machinery to coordinate actions aimed at enhancing respect for the norms of international law and ensuring the security and interests of all States.

Alongside the maintenance of international peace and security, we welcome United Nations efforts in assisting the developing countries in their endeavour to achieve a greater degree of economic development and self-reliance. The role of the United Nations in world affairs is all-inclusive. For this role to be effective, it is important that the Organization's methods of operation be characterized by accountability and transparency. Ethiopia subscribes to the calls for democratizing the decision-making processes of the United Nations system and for streamlining its bureaucracy. I am hopeful that at this session the General Assembly will review and assess these priority issues with a view to revitalizing the Organization so that it can meet the imperatives of the time.

The PRESIDENT: A number of representatives have requested to speak in exercise of the right of reply, and I shall call upon them now.

May I remind members that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second, and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. MCLEAN (United States of America): The United States notes with sadness the tone of the remarks delivered earlier today by the Foreign Minister of Cuba, particularly the disparaging approach to the efforts, hopes and accomplishments of this institution. Cuba is indeed a troubled land whose people continue to pay a heavy price for their Government's failed economic management and ideological rigidity. To shirk blame, the Cuban Government seeks refuge in misstatements, such as the totally false assertion that the United States prevents Cuba from purchasing medicine.

But these and other ludicrous claims do nothing to mitigate the suffering the Cuban Government has inflicted on its people. Rather, they call the world's attention to the increasing desperation of those who swim frenetically against the currents of political freedom, economic opportunity and human rights.

Mr. NAIMI ARFA (Islamic Republic of Iran): This morning the Assembly heard a statement by the Foreign Minister of the United Arab Emirates. I regret that I have to reply, and I do so only to set the record straight.

My country has endeavoured in earnest over the past several years to work out arrangements, in consultation and cooperation with the countries of the Persian Gulf region, to foster and consolidate security and solidity. We have affirmed, officially and on numerous occasions, the need to establish regional security and cooperation arrangements in the Persian Gulf based on the commitment of every State to the following principles: respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity; the unacceptability of claims on the territories of others; the inviolability of international borders; non-resort to force in the settlement of disputes; non-interference in the internal affairs of other States; respect for and compliance with existing agreements and understandings; and dialogue and mutual understanding.

Members are fully aware that this morning my Minister expounded on this matter in his statement before the Assembly. In fact, he had presented a detailed plan to that effect to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session, three years ago. Ever since, we have been very keen to contribute to the implementation of that plan.

The second aspect I would like to address, although very briefly, concerns the crux of the matter: the differences between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the United Arab Emirates. Facts simply fail to corroborate the scenario presented by the Foreign Minister of the United Arab Emirates. It may not be that difficult to portray a nice, albeit self-serving, picture but it would be very difficult indeed to make a consistent case. The sequence of events as they really happened, and as things were, is quite different from the version of the United Arab Emirates.

Since late in the summer of 1992, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran has endeavoured in earnest and with sincerity to resolve the misunderstandings between the two countries that had arisen as regards Abu Musa island. Towards that end, and on the basis of the overall effort to which I have just referred, we entered into negotiations with the other party. The international community is well aware of the Iranian initiative late in September 1992 of sending a high-level delegation to Abu Dhabi for negotiations. In all honesty, it was our hope that the other party would reciprocate this approach and attitude. Much to our surprise, the United Arab Emirates party raised certain preconditions for the negotiations, which were totally unacceptable. This forced the bilateral talks to come to a halt at that stage.

Moreover, ever since the end of the first round of negotiations in Abu Dhabi, the other party, which had anticipated the resumption of talks in Tehran, failed to do so. Instead, in pursuit of objectives inconsistent with the peaceful settlement of disputes, they resorted to other ways and means, such as the issuance in many places of repeated carbon-copy statements.

The approach and behaviour of the United Arab Emirates over the past year, which seems to have been cheered on by a not-so-congruent consort of well-wishes from within and outside the region, make it crystal clear that they have not committed themselves to honest negotiations with the objective of resolving problems.

Rather, they have tried by every means possible to keep the pending difficulty in a state of permanent limbo, pushing the situation periodically to centre stage in the Persian Gulf by rubber-stamp statements coming out of various Arab gatherings. It is indeed a matter of deep regret that the United Arab Emirates party chose to keep the misunderstanding between the two countries alive and simmering, a misjudgement which seems to have been prompted by expressions of support from other countries - which, in any case, are transient in nature.

All through this process the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran has publicly, as well as through diplomatic channels, expressed its readiness on numerous occasions to engage in and resume bilateral talks, without any preconditions, on all issues pending between the two countries. The official visit by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Abu Dhabi in May 1993 best illustrates the Iranian attitude. In the joint statement that was issued at the end of the two-day visit, the United Arab Emirates and Iran expressed their desire and readiness to engage in further talks to remove obstacles hindering discussions on issues pending between the two countries. The statement continued:

> "This has to be implemented to achieve the hoped-for improvement in bilateral relations which will contribute positively to the security and stability of the region."

After that latest Iranian initiative, the United Arab Emirates Minister was supposed to reciprocate the visit, the details of which were to be discussed and finalized through normal diplomatic channels. The announcement in Abu Dhabi in September 1993 of the cancellation of the forthcoming visit to Tehran was indeed a matter of surprise. Just two days prior to that announcement the Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates in Tehran had delivered a positive message from his Government to the Iranian Foreign Minister in which the date of the visit had been set.

We were and continue to be fully prepared in Tehran to engage in frank and in-depth discussions with the United Arab Emirates delegation of all issues pending between the two sides. Of course - and let me be very clear - we were prepared to enter into negotiations without any preconditions. From the very beginning we have found unacceptable the setting by the United Arab Emirates of preconditions for negotiations, and it continues to be so. It is simply illogical and contrary to normal practice in inter-State relations for one party to an issue to make resumption of bilateral talks contingent upon acceptance by the other side of its conditions.

I would like to say a word about the substance of the claim put forward by the United Arab Emirates. Without entering into any lengthy discussion of the true history of the islands in question, which is well known, I need only reiterate the legitimacy of the Iranian position with regard to its unassailable and indisputable sovereignty over the islands. Ample and solid historical evidence from antiquity to the present time corroborates our position. The fact that Iranian sovereignty over the islands in question was interrupted between 1904 and 1971 as a result of colonial

ploys does not by any means change the status of those islands. What transpired in 1971 was no more than the reassertion of Iran's sovereignty over the islands.

While reiterating my Government's full commitment to the 1971 Memorandum of Understanding between Iran and Sharjah on the Abu-Musa island, I would take this opportunity to underline our full-fledged adherence to the principle of respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of other countries in the Persian Gulf. However, I would like to stress at the same time that it is incumbent upon all States to respect this principle. Moreover, allusion to subjective, self-serving and baseless historical claims over the territory of other States is, as the recent Persian Gulf crisis best illustrates, nothing but a dangerous political minefield with catastrophic consequences, a true Pandora's box that the international community would rather have not opened.

Having said that, on behalf of my delegation I would like to reaffirm once again my Government's principled approach to our relations with the United Arab Emirates within the general framework of our policy towards the strategic Persian Gulf region, and to reconfirm our willingness and readiness to continue bilateral negotiations for the mutually beneficial resolution of issues pending between the two countries. For us in Iran, the imperative of the maintenance of security and tranquillity in the area is of paramount importance. We hope that our brothers in Abu Dhabi will reciprocate this spirit of good-neighbourly and brotherly relations, thus denying any opportunity to extraneous elements from within and outside the region to fan the flames on behalf of interests that are not those of the United Arab Emirates, Iran and the Persian Gulf.

Mr. SAMHAN (United Arab Emirates) *(interpretation from Arabic)*: The Iranian delegate has referred in his statement to the existing dispute between the United Arab Emirates and Iran over the three islands which belong to my country, namely Greater Tunb, Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa. On behalf of the delegation of the United Arab Emirates and in reply to the statement just made by the representative of Iran, I should like to emphasize the fact that my country rejects Iran's military occupation of the three islands that it has done so since the beginning of 1971, and has condemned the measures taken by Iran which have resulted in the killing of many of the inhabitants of those islands who were nationals of the United Arab Emirates and who had remained on the Islands. We have already declared this position in the General Assembly, in the Security Council and in other United Nations bodies, as well as in other regional organs. We still consider the Iranian presence on the three islands merely as a military, unlawful occupation that contravenes the Charter of the United Nations, the rules of international law and the norms of good-neighbourliness.

We have tried to settle the dispute by peaceful means through contacts between the two countries, but the Iranian side has persisted in its stance which rejects our claims. In particular it has refused any form of consideration of its military occupation of Greater Tunb, Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa and has insisted on dealing with secondary questions that have nothing to do with the substance of the matter. Over the past two years, it has escalated the conflict by resorting to a number of unlawful measures and practices including the use of military force, against the nationals of the United Arab Emirates on the island of Abu Musa, in violation of the Memorandum of Understanding of 1971.

Despite all that, my country wishes to declare once again its complete willingness to settle this dispute by any peaceful means stipulated by the Charter, so as to regain its sovereignty over the three islands, which are an integral part of our territory. This stance by the United Arab Emirates stems from its conviction that stability and security in the Gulf region necessitate cooperation and mutual respect for sovereignty by the countries of the region, non-interference in the internal affairs of others and the need to settle disputes by peaceful means, especially in the light of the new international and regional circumstances. Therefore, we appeal once again to the Islamic Republic of Iran to give a favourable reply to our call.

Mr. IBANEZ FAJARDO (Cuba) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: It cannot be claimed that any atmosphere of cordiality exists when criminal policies continue to be carried out in an attempt to starve my small country to death, solely because we have a dream of independence to which we hold fast and a plan for social justice that fits our own conditions. The powerful State to the North cannot dictate formulas to the Cuban people. Our history has taught us the lack of respect for our ideals shown by this gigantic neighbour, with its colonial yearnings and its tendentious manipulation of the media. Cuba is doing nothing more than demonstrating its willingness to have peaceful coexistence and international cooperation, and we only ask for respect for our struggles and for our dignity and patriotism.

The meeting rose at 7.55 p.m.